

BEAUTIFUL STORIES

FROM THE GOOD OLD BOOK



by ISABEL C. BYRUM



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DANIEL AND THE LIONS.

Beautiful Stories

from the



Good Old Book.

BY
Isabel C.
Byrum.

The good old Book, so pure and true,
Is filled with stories old, yet new;
To old and young they may be told,
New beauties will to both unfold.

Illustrated.

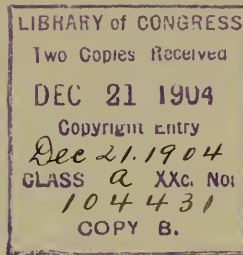


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BEAUTIFUL STORIES

From the Good Old Book.



Children are children,
We've heard people say;
They all like a story
Told fresh ev'ry day.
It may not be lengthy,
It may not be grand;
But it must be simple,
If they understand.
So, then, tell them stories,
But be sure they're true;
Just take your dear Bible,
And give a review.
Their young hearts so tender
Will soon be inclined
To take their own Bible,
These stories to find.
Just tell them of Adam,
Of Abel and Cain;
Then tell them of Noah,
How God sent the rain;
And then take up Abram,
That dear man of old,



Who showed, when God proved him,

A heart of pure gold;

Next Jacob and Judah—

'Tis through them descends

Our dear loving Savior,

The best of all friends.

And so tell the stories,

That each child may see

How sin brought all sorrow

On humanity.

Oh, show them God's mercy

And great, tender love

In sending a Savior,

His Son, from above.

And tell them how Jesus

Invites each dear child

To come, seek salvation,

In words sweet and mild.

He said, "Suffer children

To come unto me;

Of such is the kingdom

Of heaven to be."

And then, as you teach them

The true, living way,

Just show them how sin bids

For souls ev'ry day.

The sweet little children,

With body and brain,

Untarnished by evil,

So free from all stain,

Are placed by the Salesman





Before a fierce crowd,
Each longing to own them,
And robe in his shroud.
They see the sweet faces
So innocent, pure,
And then they endeavor
These gems to secure.

“We bid”—Pest and Famine—
“For life and for limb.
With fever and sickness,
We’ll make their eyes dim.
We’ll nurse them and rock them
In cradles our own,
And we will be careful
That none hear their moan.”

Then Beggary, howling,
Says, “I’ll buy them all.
I’ll teach them great lessons,
To skulk and to crawl.
They’ll sleep in my lair,
Decay in sunshine;
In haunts full of sickness,
I’ll force them to dine.”

Then Crime, stepping forward,
With wolfish grin, said,
“Oh, come! I’ll bid higher:
Each child shall be led
In sin’s pleasant pathway.





No law shall they heed.
With novels and folly
Their young souls I'll feed;
I'll teach them to covet,
And then they will steal;
And when they are older,
The law they shall feel.
The prison and gallows
We find in our land—
'Twere so wrong to let them
In idleness stand.
So give me the children,
I'll feed them with care;
And when life is ended,
God's wrath they will share."

"Oh, shame!" cries Religion,
So pure and so true;
"Oh, shame on your offers
Of what you will do!
I'll take the dear children,
I'll raise them for God;
And they'll know their Savior
And walk where he trod.
I'll show them his footprints,
And holes in his hand;
And when they are older,
Then they'll understand."

Oh, let us take warning
From this auction sale;





And bid little children
So high Sin will fail!
He'll not reach our figures;
He'll leave in dismay,
And seek other children,
His craft to display.
And let us endeavor
To teach, in their youth,
The sweet simple story
Of Jesus and truth;
And let us encourage
Their young hearts so dear;
For "children are children,"
Be they far or near.

This book has been written,
In love and with prayer,
For dear tired mothers
With hearts full of care.
They see their sweet children,
And then hear them plead,
"O mother, a story
Please tell or do read."
'Twill help as they teach them
The stories of old;
And each one will please them,
Though so often told.
All homes will be brighter,
With books of this kind
To help to enlighten
Each eager young mind.





And thus they will early
Be trained for the Lord,
By hearing the stories
From God's blessed Word.



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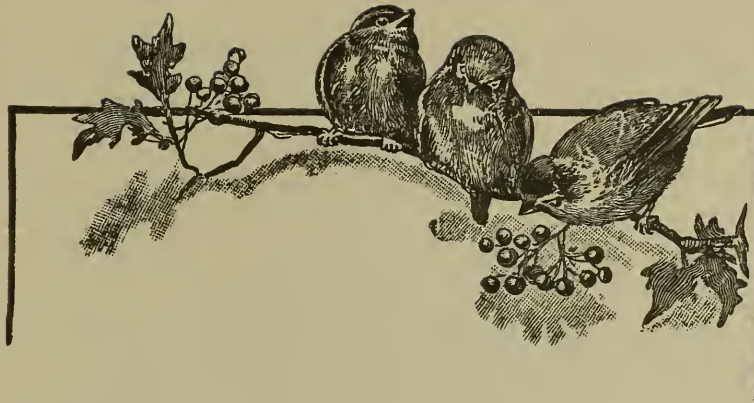
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BEAUTIFUL STORIES
FROM THE
GOOD OLD BOOK.



The Creation.

A GREAT many years ago this lovely earth where we live was not as we see it now. All was dark everywhere. The land was not separated from the water, but the water covered all. When the earth was in this state, God's Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, and he said, "Let there be light: and there was light"; and God called the light Day and the darkness Night. He did this on the first day. On the second God made the sky which we see up above the world, where the clouds are, and called it Heaven. On the third day he caused the waters to divide and leave dry land in some places. The land he called Earth and the water Seas.

How lonely it must have been, even after all this had been done. But God did not intend to leave it thus. He caused grass to grow up out of the ground, also the bushes and trees that have fruit on them, and that bear seed, so that when the seed fell on the ground it would grow. God did all this on the third day. On the fourth he made two great lights. The Sun, which was the largest and brightest, was to shine in the day time, and the Moon, at night. He made the stars also; and these he placed in the sky, where we see them now.

On the fifth day he made the great whales that live in the sea, and the fishes, and the birds. On the sixth day he made the animals, both great and small. He also created man, whom he called Adam, in his own image and likeness. He breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul, so that he was different from every

other creature. God looked on everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And on the seventh day he rested from all his work



ADAM AND EVE AMONG THE ANIMALS.

God also made a beautiful garden, and planted everything in it that was good to eat or look at. In this garden he placed the man

whom he had made. God also brought the animals and birds to him to see what he would call them; and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was its name.

One day God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and God took one of the ribs from Adam's side and out of it formed a woman. Adam called her name Eve, and she became his wife. God would come down into the garden and talk with them. He liked to do this, for he loved them; and as he created them good, they had no sin in their hearts. So long as they obeyed him, he could dwell with them; and they were very happy.

The Temptation.

GOD had intended Adam and Eve to always be happy, but there was a great enemy called Satan. Satan came to Eve one day and tempted her to do something God had told her not to do. She told Satan what God had told Adam—that they would die if they disobeyed; but Satan said God did not mean it that way. The woman listened and did what God had commanded her not to do. Next Adam was tempted and did wrong. Now both the people, who had been made in the image of God, that is, with pure hearts, were sinners.

In the evening God came to see them. They heard him walking in the garden, but knew how wicked they had been, and they hid among the trees. When God called them, they answered; and when he questioned them, they confessed their sin. God was grieved and angry with them. He sent them both out of the beautiful garden, and placed angels and a fiery sword at the gate to keep any one from entering again. Sin is the one thing that God hates.

God told Adam and Eve, that since they had been so wicked the ground should not yield its fruit for them without their working hard to make it, but it should bear thorns and thistles; that their bodies now should die as he had told them, and they should go back to dust, of which they had been made. Their souls which he had given them were to live.

Truly this was a sad state of affairs. After having everything they wished, to be brought to this must have been hard indeed. But God prepared a way so that they might be spared any more punishment after death, and might receive bodies again when the time for this should come. He promised to send his dear Son as a Redeemer to suffer and die for their sins and for their children's also, so that if they repented of their sins and believed what God said, they should be saved and heaven should be their eternal home.

O the wonderful mercy that God doth bestow
On the sinful creation he left here below!
They were severed from heaven and lost in the night;
But in Jesus they're saved, if they will but do right.

How Man Fell.

When Adam was created,
So many years ago,
His heart was pure as heaven,
No sin did Adam know.

But they would be enlightened
And know things strange and new:
Thus Satan talked in Eden
And told them things to do.

God placed him in a garden,
Which had been made most fair;
And in his care and keeping
He placed all that was there.

When Satan had ceased tempting,
And there was planted in
Their hearts, once pure as heaven,
That cruel monster Sin,

He gave a wife to Adam,
To help him on his way;
But in a careless moment
God's word they disobey.

They knew that God would punish,
And knew they'd disobeyed;
They hid within the garden,
For now they felt afraid.

'Twas Satan came and told them
A wicked, wicked lie—
That if of sin they tasted,
God knew they'd never die,

When God came there that evening,
He drove them out the gate;
He told them of the future
And what should be their fate.



DRIVEN FROM THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN.

No more the ground should yield them,
Its fruit without hard toil;
For it should bring up thistles
And thorns from out its soil.

Their children should inherit
Vile sin, which caused the fall;
And thus the sin of Adam
Was passed upon us all.

God sent another Adam,
Down from his throne above:
His own dear Son, our Savior,
Who brought redeeming love.

And as the sin of Adam
Brought death to ev'ry one,
Just so the death of Jesus
Eternal life hath won.

The First Murder.

AFTER Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden of Eden, God gave them children, so that when they died their children would live on the earth in their places. And so it was that their two sons Cain and Abel were born.

Cain was a gardener and raised things to eat, while Abel was a shepherd and took care of sheep. Both of the boys, like their parents, had sinful hearts and would often do evil things; but Abel believed God and wanted to do what was right.

One day Abel wanted to offer something to the Lord and he chose a lamb out of his flock and killed it and then burned it upon an altar made out of some stones. God was pleased with Abel for this, for the lamb seemed so much like the Savior that God had promised: it was gentle, patient, harmless, and innocent like Him, and God wonderfully blessed Abel for his offering or sacrifice. But Cain's offering was different. He had a wicked, jealous heart and was not sorry for his sins. When he saw that God accepted Abel's sacrifice and did not accept his own, he became very angry with God and with his brother. One day when they were in the field together, Cain became so angry that he killed Abel, and thus the first murder was committed. Would to God it had been the last!

Of course God knew it, for he knows everything that happens; and he asked Cain where Abel was. Cain at once told a lie, thus prov-

ing the fact that sin was in his heart. He said he did not know where his brother was; but God said: "Thy brother's blood crieth unto me



THE DEATH OF ABEL.

from the ground. And now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength."

Cain was very sorry then and said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." God would not take care of him any more, and sent him off into a country by himself. The Lord placed some kind of mark upon him, so that people would know that it was Cain and that they did not dare to kill him, even if they would like to; for God wanted to punish him in his own way. Oh, it is a dreadful thing to disobey God and to have his displeasure resting upon us! It pays to do what is right. Cain's descendants were very very wicked.

After Abel's death and Cain was sent away, God gave another son to Adam. His name was Seth. When Seth's son Enos was born, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord"; and we find that many of his descendants loved and trusted God. A man named Enoch was descended from Seth. It was said of him that he walked with God. This means that he loved God, thought of him, and kept near him all the time, doing his best to please him. Enoch did not die. God took him up to be with him while he still lived.

Enoch had a son whose name was Methuselah. We do not know of any one who lived to be as old as Methuselah. He was nine hundred and sixty-nine years old when he died.

The Flood.

MANY years after Cain had killed his brother, a man named Noah was born. He was one of Seth's descendants. Noah loved God and tried to get the people also to love him. But, oh! their hearts were so wicked! They did so many bad things that God was sorry that he had created man upon the earth.

When God saw how much Noah loved him and how he tried to teach the people to love him, he loved Noah and said that he would save him, his wife, his three sons, and their wives, but that he was going to send rain upon the earth until everything else that was alive would be drowned.

He told Noah to build an ark, or large boat with a house on it that was three stories high. God showed him just how it should be



THE ARK.

made, and told him that when it was finished he was to take two of every kind of animals, birds, and creeping things into the ark and keep them there until the rain was all over. Noah believed that God would

do just as he said, so he went to work at once to build the ark. All the time when not working on it he was preaching to the people, trying to get them sorry for their sinful ways, that they might be saved also; but they would not hear.

Noah was an old man when he had finished building the ark. When it was completed, he took with him into it his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, their wives, and two of every other living creature that God had made, and God shut them in. The rain then began falling, and it kept on raining for forty days and forty nights. It rained until there was not a spot of dry earth anywhere.

Oh, how sorry the people must have been that they had not listened to what Noah had said and had been forgiven their sins, so that they too could go into the ark! But it was too late. God would not listen to their cries, and the waters soon covered them up and they died. But the ark rose high above the earth, and all that were in it were safe and dry.

When it stopped raining, all that could be seen was water everywhere; but God did not forget about Noah and those with him in the ark. No, God took care of them, and they were safe until the waters went down. They at last found themselves upon the top of a mount called Ararat. How their hearts must have gone up to God in praise and thankfulness for his wonderful goodness to them!

Some day God is going to punish the wicked people that are on the earth now, but it will not be with water next time.

An Altar of Thanksgiving.

NOAH did not know just when would be the best time to come out of the ark, for he did not know how much water was upon the earth; so after waiting forty days, he sent out a raven. It did not return, but flew about over the waters. So he sent out a dove, which returned. By its returning Noah knew that the waters were still upon the earth, and he took the dove inside the ark again. He waited about a week.



THE RETURN OF THE DOVE.

longer, and then sent the dove again. This time she returned with an olive leaf. By this leaf Noah knew that the waters were going down. The next time he sent the dove out she did not return. God spoke to him then, and told him it was time to leave the ark; so they all went out into the world. Just think how strange they must have felt, knowing that they were the only ones saved.

Noah built an altar very soon after he came out of the ark, and he made an offering unto the Lord, to thank him for his great goodness. God was pleased with it, just as he was when Abel made an offering to him. And the Lord said he would set the rainbow in the cloud and whenever any saw it they should know that it was the token, or sign, of his covenant that there should never again be a flood upon the earth to destroy every living thing as had just been done.

There was a flood
Long, long ago,
When all were drowned
On earth below,

Except eight souls
God chose to bless,
To prove his love
And faithfulness.

These eight were in
An ark secure;
None of the woe
Did they endure.

And with them, too,
We find a pair
Of all God placed
In Adam's care.

They waited till
God said to go;
And when they went,
God blessed them so.

They praised him for
His love and care,
And all sent up
An earnest prayer.

And God said then,
No more would he
Send rain to drown
Humanity.

He placed his bow
Up in the sky,
And then he told
The reason why.

He said that when
We saw it there,
We'd know we had
His loving care.



NOAH'S SACRIFICE AND THE RAINBOW.

The Tower of Babel.

AFTER the flood the people began to increase in number, until finally there were a great many. They all spoke the same language, and so could understand one another. They traveled around from place to place. When they came to a plain called the land of Shinar, they stayed longer than usual. While there they planned to build a city and a tower, so that if they should become scattered, there would be one place where they could all meet. They planned to build this tower so high that the top would reach to heaven, and then they would go up and down whenever they wanted to.

God let them go on with their work for awhile, but finally he came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men were building. And the Lord said that as the people were all one and all spoke the same language and had planned to build this tower to reach up to heaven, it would not do, and their work must be stopped. So he caused them to speak different languages, and they were so confused that they could not understand one another. Then they stopped building the city; so the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth. The place was afterwards called Babel, for "babel" means confusion.

Now do not forget that all the people in the world have sprung from Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The Jews, who were a people whom God loved very much, and of whom we will farther on tell you a great deal, were descended from Shem. The Negro or black race are some of the descendants of Ham; and we, with many other nations, have come from Japheth.

Abram and Lot.

IN the land of Ur lived a man of the name of Abram, who was descended from Shem and who loved and worshiped God. Abram so fully believed and obeyed him that he was called the friend of God. God promised him many things, one of which was that the Savior who was to come into the world some day should be of his descendants.

Well, the Lord told Abram to go away from his father's house into



THE TOWER OF BABEL.

another land, and he would bless him and make his name great and through him all families of the earth should be blessed.

Abram did as he was told, having faith in God, believing that God would do all for him that he had promised. Lot, a nephew, went also. Both men became very rich and had many sheep, cattle, and servants. When they arrived at the land to which God had directed Abram, the



THE STRIFE OF THE HERDSMEN.

Lord told him again that he meant to give it to his children. That land was called the land of Canaan because the people living there were descendants of Canaan, who was one of Ham's sons. Abram built an altar there, upon which he offered sacrifices to God.



ABRAHAM MEETS MELCHIZEDEK.

They did not stay long in one spot, however, but kept going on toward the south. After awhile there was a famine in the land and it was hard to get enough to eat; so they went down into Egypt. Abram got into trouble down there, and they were glad to return. They went back to the place where God had appeared when he renewed his promises to Abram. Here their herdsmen, or servants, began to quarrel, and they decided it was best to part. Abram told Lot to take one part of the land, and he would take the other. Lot was to choose first, and he chose the side that was well watered and beautiful to look at.

There were two cities quite close, too, and Lot pitched his tent near one of them. This city was called Sodom and was one of the cities God afterward destroyed on account of the wickedness done in them.

Abram was perfectly satisfied to let Lot have the land he had chosen, and Abram went in another direction. When Abram was alone, the Lord said to him: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

When Abram was ninety-nine years old God changed his name to Abraham, which means "father of a great multitude." His wife's name was Sarah. Their faith was tested many times, but they remained true to God. When God gave them the child he had promised, they named him Isaac.

Lot's Trouble.

LOT showed a selfish spirit when he made a choice of the land God had given him and Abram, and he had to suffer for it. After they separated, Lot started toward Sodom, and it did not take him long to get inside the city. It is just the same with any one who chooses a life of ease or selfishness: it does not take one long to get into evil company and into trouble.

There was a terrible war between the nations near by about that

time, and Lot, who was in Sodom, was taken captive and everything he had taken from him. As soon as Abram heard of the trouble, he took his three hundred and eighteen trained servants, born in his own house, and pursued the enemies. After a hard battle, he brought back everything that had been taken, together with Lot and all his goods.

The king of Sodom was very happy and grateful and wanted to give Abram all the goods as pay for what he had done. Abram said he would not accept anything for himself, lest the king should say that he had made Abram rich, but he would take a portion for the young men who went with him.

At this time a priest of God of the name of Melchizedek blessed Abram, and Abram gave him the tenth of the spoils.

Lot continued to live in this place, having married a woman of Sodom. He had two daughters.

Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

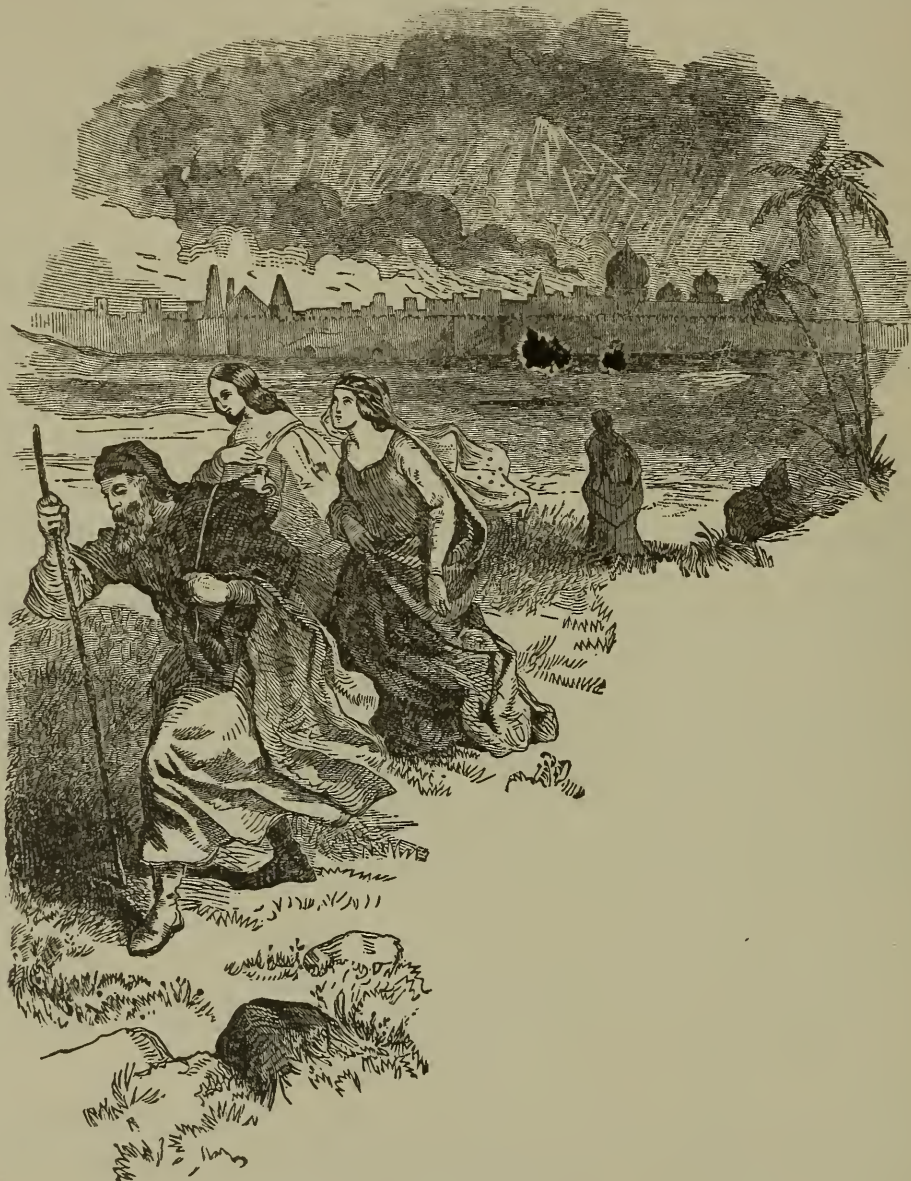
ONE day when Abraham sat in the door of his tent, he looked up and saw three angels standing near him, and he bowed his face to the ground. After he had cared for them as was the custom at that time, they said the Lord meant to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah on account of the sins of the people who lived there.

Abraham felt very sad over this, and thought of Lot. He begged the Lord to spare the cities if there could be found a few good people in them, and God said he would if he could find ten. God could not find ten just souls in Sodom, but he remembered how Abraham longed to see Lot saved, and sent his angels to warn him. Lot heard and was saved.

Two angels then went to Sodom and found Lot sitting in the gate. When he saw them, he too bowed his face to the ground. These angels told Lot the cities were going to be destroyed and he must hasten to leave the place, taking with him those he loved. The angels said to go and not look back or stay in all the plain, but to escape to the mountain.

Lot started with his wife and two daughters, but they had not

gone far when his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. By turning she proved that her heart was still in the city. The others had to go on without her. They escaped to a little town called Zoar.



FLEEING FROM SODOM.

Sodom and Gomorrah.

See these wicked cities burn,
God is sending judgment down;

They did all his mercy spurn,
Now the fire sweeps o'er each town.

Hark! the groans, the sighs—what fear!	One looks back; 'tis Lot's own wife—
As destruction comes so sore.	Proves her heart is there to stay:
“Haste!” four souls the message hear,	God in anger turns her form
“Do not wait a moment more.”	Into salt from human clay.

Oh! the judgments of our God
 On this wicked human race.
 Of these cities where man trod
 Naught is seen but vacant space.

Abraham's Sacrifice.

God had given Abraham the promise that his children should be as the sand of the sea and the stars of the sky. Though Abraham and Sarah were now quite old and had had no child, God, according to his promise, gave them a son and said to call his name Isaac.

They must have loved him dearly; and knowing how many promises God had made to him, they loved him all the more. The Lord knew how dear Isaac was to Abraham, but he wanted to test Abraham's faith and see if he would be willing to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God. So he said to Abraham, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” It must have been a sad moment for Abraham, but he was faithful and took his son as the Lord had said, willing to give him back to God if he wanted him to.

Isaac could not understand about it, and on the way he asked his father where the lamb was that they were going to offer and was told that God would provide a lamb. When they came to the place, Abraham made an altar, laid the wood upon it, and then bound his dear son Isaac and laid him on the altar upon the wood. Oh, how Abraham's heart must have ached! yet he was true and even held the knife ready to slay his son. God not only wanted to see if Abraham

would obey him, but also to know if he would trust him to yet fulfil his promise.

God then sent his angel, who told Abraham where he could find an offering, and that he must not hurt the boy. A ram had been



ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

caught by the horns in some bushes near by, and Abraham laid this ram upon the wood instead of Isaac. The lamb offered was to show that some day God would offer his dear Son. He would be a sacrifice



THE ANGEL APPEARING TO ABRAHAM.

for every one who would believe on him. The lamb was only to point to the great Lamb of God.

God's Will Was Done.

There was a man in years of old
Whose heart was true and tried as gold;
He had a son whom God had giv'n,
A gift which he had sent from heav'n.

This son was loved by parents dear,
But he was never worshiped here;
One day God chose to see if they
Their son would give—the strangest way.

He called the man of God so true
And told him what he'd have him do;
God said an off'ring he must take,
And on the mount an altar make.

The lamb must be his own dear son.
He does not wait and does not run;
He toils with patience up the hill,
The words of God now to fulfil.

His son upon the altar placed,
This faithful man his God then faced;
And as his knife is raised above
We find his God a God of love.

God stays his hand and shows him where
A sacrifice is held secure;
This man is given back his son,
Because he said, "God's will be done."

God said that he would richly bless
His soul for all his faithfulness;
That all the nations of the earth
Through him should date a royal birth.

It was the birth of God's own Son,	He bears the load of all their sin,
The precious, holy, sinless One;	And through his blood they enter in
This Son, the Lamb of God, so dear.	A life that's made so pure and clean
Was offered for poor sinners here.	That naught of sin and shame is seen.

Faith and Obedience.

ABRAHAM was faithful and obedient to God, who blessed and caused him to prosper. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we read, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive as an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." In the fourth chapter of Romans we read, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

Abraham was an example to the Christian. Whoever becomes a child of God receives many promises. We have the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 38, 39), and a home in heaven. John 14: 2. Abraham traveled through a strange land, and so does the Christian; for the Christian is not of the world, although he may be in it. John 17: 16. All the way along God keeps encouraging the Christian with many promises, just as he did Abraham; and if he continues faithful, great is his reward both in this life and in the one to come.

He must not have any idols (1 John 5: 21), but must have everything where he can lay it upon the altar and be perfectly willing to give it up. This is the way Abraham felt when he laid his precious son Isaac on the altar.

Lot was an example to the Christian in another way. By his experience can be seen how careful the child of God should be in choosing the way he goes and with whom he goes. Lot chose to go toward Sodom, because Satan made him believe he would enjoy himself more, and the country looked so beautiful. But by going he lost everything he had, except his life.

Satan pictures things out to the Christian in the same way, but he should be like faithful Abraham and let God direct him where to go. God shows how to live and the way to go, by his Word—the Bible—and by his Holy Spirit, which is in the Christian's heart. "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2:5. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." "Great peace have they that love thy law: and there is no stumbling-block to them." Psa. 119:11, 165. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8:14.

Rebekah, Isaac's Wife.

WHEN Abraham became very old and Sarah had died and been buried in a cave that he had chosen for a family burying-place, he called his eldest servant, who had charge of his things, and made him promise that he would go back to Abraham's father's house and there choose a wife for Isaac.

Abraham wanted this to be done because God had made so many promises to Isaac about the land that he was going to give and about those who were going to live after him, that Abraham wanted to choose a wife that would be a help to Isaac and not lead him away from serving God.

The servant did just as Abraham said to do. He took ten camels and went back to Abraham's old home; and when he came to a well outside the city, he made the camels kneel down. It was evening and about the time women went out to draw water from the well. He asked the Lord to give him a sign that he might know if God wanted any of them to be Isaac's wife.

The sign asked for was that God would cause the one whom the servant asked for a drink to say, "Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also."

Almost before he had finished praying a young woman came; and when he asked for a drink, she said the very words that he had asked

God to have her say. Still he wanted to be sure; so he asked her whose daughter she was, and found out that she was a **cousin to Isaac**. After he had told her father and brother all about what he came for and how God had directed him, they said that it surely was the Lord leading him and that Rebekah, for that was her name, was before him and he could take her and go and let her be the wife of his master's son. So he took her and her servants and started back.



REBECCA AT THE WELL.

They met Isaac in the field where he had gone to pray. When he saw Rebekah, he loved her and took her home with him, and she became his wife.

Abraham was very rich, and he gave all that he had to Isaac. When Abraham died, he was buried beside his wife in the cave.

God blessed Isaac just as he said he would, and gave him two sons, named Esau and Jacob.

Esau and Jacob.

THERE was a great difference between these two boys that God gave to Isaac and Rebekah. Strange as it seemed then, God chose the younger instead of the first-born to prove his mighty power. Esau the elder was a great hunter and enjoyed being out of doors most of the time. He was red-haired, and his body all over was like a hairy garment. Jacob was quiet, like his father.

In those days the eldest son had what they called the birthright. A blessing belonged to it, which the father gave him just before dying; so, of course, Esau had a right to this. But God had told Rebekah that the elder one was going to serve the younger.

Jacob one day prepared some food called pottage. When his brother Esau came in from hunting, he was very hungry. He asked Jacob to give him some of the food; but Jacob told him he would not unless Esau would give him his birthright. Esau did not care very much about his birthright, and as he was so very hungry he sold it to Jacob for something to eat.

But there came a time when their father was old. His eyes were dim, and he could not live very much longer. He felt that it was time to bless his sons and get ready to die. So he called Esau and said to him, "Take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take [hunt] me some venison; and make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die."

Now, Rebekah loved Jacob and was afraid that if Esau received the blessing from his father, then what God had said about the elder one's serving the younger would not come to pass. So she and Jacob planned to deceive Isaac.

Isaac's Sons.

Two boys were sent a home to bless
So many years ago,

A sweet reward of faithfulness
Of parents here below.

These boys were very different,
In looks, and habits, too;
But God had planned a special work
For each of them to do.

She dressed him in his brother's clothes,
Then gave him choicest meat;
And Isaac, who was blind, could not
Detect his son's deceit.

The elder was a hunter brave;
His father loved him best,
And felt that when he came to die
This son was to be blest.

When Esau knew what had been done,
And knew what he had lost,
In wrath he vowed that Jacob's blood
He'd shed at any cost.

But God had meant the younger son
To be the future heir
Of all the great inheritance
Placed in his father's care.

His mother then in greatest fear
Called Jacob to her side,
And sent him to his uncle's house
A while there to abide.

Now, Isaac, who was growing old,
With few more years to live,
Had bid his elder son prepare;
The blessing soon he'd give.

Before he left, his father saw
The blessing God had planned,
And charged him not to take a wife
From tribes within their land.

'Twas Jacob's mother found a plan,
And worked in subtle way,
To have the blessing fall upon
Her younger son that day.

But to his mother's house go back
And choose from there a wife;
Then God would bless and prosper him
With riches all his life.

So Jacob left his father's house:
His journey God made bright,
And in a dream appeared to him
With promises that night.

Isaac's Blessing.

REBEKAH heard Isaac when he told Esau that he meant to bless him before he died, and then it was that she planned to deceive Isaac. She told Jacob about it, and had him bring two kids, or young goats; and she cooked the meat as nearly as she could like the kind

Esau would prepare. Then she dressed Jacob in some of Esau's clothes, and put some of the skin of the goats upon his neck and hands. He then went in and said to his father, "I am Esau thy first-born."

Isaac could not believe that Esau had returned so soon; but Jacob said, "The Lord thy God brought it [the deer] to me." So Isaac ate the meat. Then he kissed Jacob; and when he smelled the clothes and touched the hairy skin, he felt sure that it was Esau: so Isaac blessed Jacob. It was a wonderful blessing.

Isaac had scarcely ceased blessing Jacob when they heard Esau come in from hunting. He too took a nice dish of meat in to his father, and wished to be blessed. Isaac asked, "Who art thou?" and when Isaac knew what had been done, he trembled, and asked where the one was that he had just blessed, and added, "Yea, and he shall be blessed."

When Esau heard this, he was very sorry and cried with a great and very bitter cry. He remembered that he had sold his birthright, and then saw that he had never before known how much it was worth to him. He begged his father to bless him anyway; but Isaac said that he could not take the blessing away from Jacob, although he had told a lie to get it.

Then Esau hated his brother Jacob, and said, "As soon as my father is dead, I will kill him." But Rebekah heard this and told Jacob, and she sent him away to her brother Laban's house. But God had a work for Jacob to do.

Jacob's Dream.

ISAAC called Jacob and gave him a second blessing. He then told him not to marry a wife of the land of Canaan, but to go to his uncle Laban's house.

Esau had married two wives of the land in which they lived, and this made his father and mother very sad. No doubt this was one

thing that led Rebekah to help Jacob deceive his father in regard to the blessing.

On Jacob's journey to his uncle's home, God appeared to him in a dream. One night, after taking a stone for a pillow, he lay down to sleep, and while asleep he saw a ladder set up on the earth. The top of it reached to heaven, and angels were going up and down on it. The Lord stood above it and said:

"I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken." Gen. 28:12-15.

When Jacob awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." He was afraid and said it was the house of God and the gate of heaven.

He arose early in the morning and took the stone that had been his pillow and set it up as a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it. He then named the place Bethel, which means "house of God," and made a vow or promise, that if God would take care of and lead him to the place he wanted to go and let him return again to his father's house in peace, then the Lord should always be his God; and he would always look upon that stone or pillar as God's house, and would give one-tenth of everything he had back to the Lord.

Jacob's Journey.

Far away from home and loved ones,	All alone, with naught but Heaven
Fast asleep upon the ground;	Him to shield from beasts around—

Thus we find our humble Jacob,
 With a stone beneath his head,
 Nothing but the earth beneath him—
 'This was Jacob's lonely bed.

There was One who kept watch o'er him,
 One he did not know was there;
 And a vision there was given,
 'Twas a sight to him most fair.

As he dreamed he saw a ladder,
 And its top reached to the sky;
 Angels pure he saw upon it,
 Yes, and God was standing nigh.

And the Lord in all his glory
 Talked to Jacob there that night,
 Making promises unto him
 If he only would do right.

All the land he saw around him
 Was to be his own, God said;
 And his children would be many
 As the dust in which he'd tread.

And the Lord said he would bless him
 In whatever way he'd go;
 That he never would forsake him,
 But would shield from ev'ry foe.

When the morning came in splendor,
 And from dreaming he awoke,
 He was frightened for a moment.
 For he knew that God had spoke.

" 'Twas the gateway into heaven,"
 Jacob said in silent awe,
 "And sometime I in the future
 At this place near God shall draw.

"If the Lord my soul will prosper,
 And will help me on my way,
 Then the tenth of all my living
 I will give to him each day."

And the pillow which he slept on,
 Which was nothing but a stone,
 Was soon set up as a pillar
 For a house where God was known.

Jacob and Rachel.

AS Jacob came near his mother's old home, he found a well where three flocks of sheep were waiting to be watered. He soon learned that they were his uncle Laban's sheep, and met his cousin Rachel coming to water them. She hurried to tell her father that Jacob was there. Her father was glad, and Jacob went to live with them.

After a while Jacob said to his uncle, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter." His uncle agreed to this, but deceived him by not giving him the wife he had chosen. Still Jacob wanted Rachel so much that he worked seven years more to get her.



JACOB'S DREAM.

Laban was a very selfish man and did many mean things to Jacob. But God was with Jacob and meant to fulfil his promises to him.

Jacob at His Uncle Laban's.

Now our Jacob has reached Haran,
Met his cousin on the way;
He is welcomed by her father,
And invited there to stay.

Well, we have a little story
That will interest, I know:
Jacob loved his cousin Rachel,
And he told his uncle so.

Jacob said he'd be a servant,
He would work and toil while there,
If his uncle would reward him
With the hand of Rachel fair.

Thus, he bound himself to Laban:
Seven years soon crept around,
But no word was ever spoken
Of reward poor Jacob found.

So when all these years were ended,
Jacob went with this demand,
That his uncle must reward him
With his cousin Rachel's hand.

Laban, now, was very greedy,
Wealth and gain was all he sought;
So when Jacob asked for Rachel,
It was Leah that was brought.

And for this, when asked a reason,
Laban said, "'Tis not our way,
That the younger daughter marry,
And the elder daughter stay;

"But if now you will continue
And work on for seven years,
Then you may have Rachel also"—
This is what poor Jacob hears.

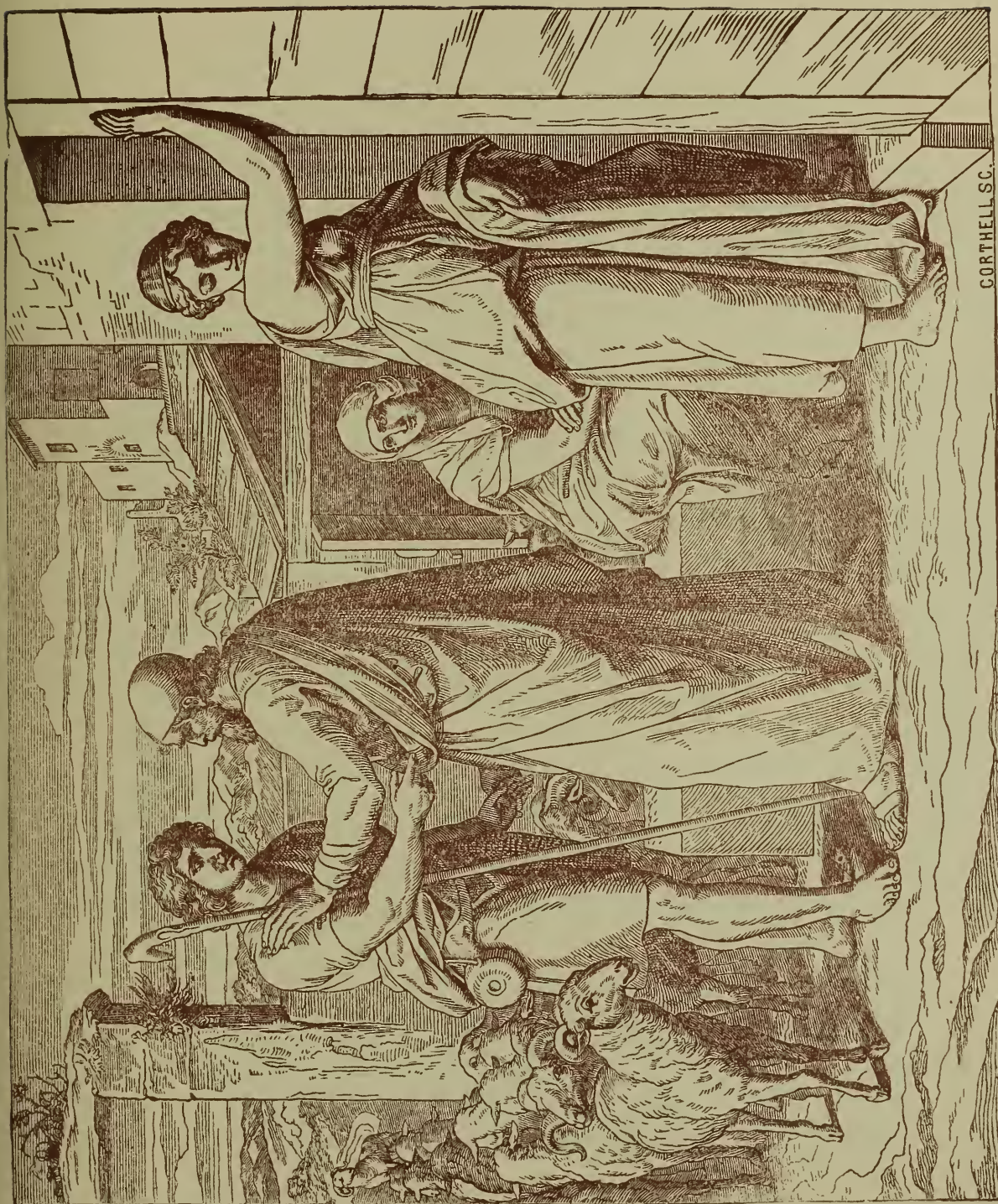
Thus, the lie he told his father,
When as Esau there he came,
Was returned and Jacob suffered,
But God cared for him the same.

He was blessed in all his labors
As he toiled from day to day,
Just as long as God consented
That in bondage he should stay.

Jacob's Return.

THE time finally came for Jacob to return to his old home. God had blessed him in many ways. He had cattle, sheep, and everything else he needed, besides many servants, a daughter, and eleven sons.

The Lord helped them on their journey, but Jacob was afraid his



JACOB MEETS HIS UNCLE LABAN.

brother would still be angry and not glad to see him. He sent men ahead to tell Esau they were coming; and as soon as Esau heard it, he started with four hundred men to meet Jacob. This made it seem that Esau surely meant to do them harm. After reminding God of his many promises to him, Jacob sent a present to his brother.



JACOB WRESTLES WITH THE ANGEL.

That night an angel came to Jacob. The Bible says the angel wrestled with him. This was a strange thing for an angel to be doing with a man; but God must have taken that way to make Jacob do as he wanted him to do.

The angel put Jacob's thigh, or part of his leg, out of joint. Jacob held to him even after that, and said, "I will not let thee go, except



THE YOUNG DREAMER.

thou bless me." This the angel did, and Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "a prince of God." He was given this name because he had power with God and man.

The next day the two brothers met. God united their hearts. They kissed each other and wept. Esau said he did not want to take the present Jacob had sent him, but Jacob wished him to and at last Esau took it.

After parting from Esau, Jacob and his family journeyed on to Bethel, the place where he had the dream and saw the ladder. Here Jacob built an altar, and God blessed him again.

Jacob had another son about this time, which made twelve. At last they came to Jacob's old home. How happy he must have been to get back!

When Isaac died, both Jacob and Esau were present to bury him.

Joseph Is Hated.

JOSEPH was one of Jacob's twelve sons. He was the eleventh. The ten elder were shepherds. Jacob loved Joseph more than he did his other sons, and he made him a coat of many colors. All this made them jealous, and finally they hated their brother.

Well, this is like the Christian: being loved by God, he is hated by the world. It is sin, too, in people's hearts that makes them jealous. A heart that is clean from all sin feels glad to see other people honored and happy.

Joseph had two dreams, which he told, and which made his brethren hate him all the more. In the first dream he thought they were all in the field binding sheaves. His sheaf stood erect, and his brothers' sheaves bowed to it. His brothers asked if he were going to reign over them. Afterwards he had another dream. In this he thought the sun, moon, and stars all bowed down to him.

When he told this dream, his father reproved him, and asked,

“Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee?” Jacob, however, thought of these dreams many times afterward. But Joseph was envied more and more by his brothers.

One time while caring for the sheep, Jacob’s sons went a long way from home. Their father wanted to know how they were getting along; so he sent Joseph to see if they were all right.

The brothers saw Joseph when he was a long distance from them, and they said, “Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.” Gen. 37: 19, 20.

They were not all so wicked; for when Reuben, the eldest brother, heard it, he advised them not to kill Joseph, but to cast him alive into a pit. His thought was that when the others had gone away, he would help Joseph out of the pit and get him back to his father.

Joseph Is Sold.

THE brothers did as Reuben said, and cast Joseph into the pit. There was no water in it; and if another wicked plot had not entered their minds, Reuben would have been able to help his brother.

Joseph had on the pretty coat which his father had given him. This his brethren took from him and dipped it in the blood of a young goat they had killed. They then planned to carry the coat back to their father and say they had found it.

As they sat down to eat, a company of merchants riding on camels went by on their way to Egypt. It then came into the brothers’ hearts to sell Joseph to these men. The Bible tells of another person who was sold for a few pieces of silver. It was God’s own Son, and he was sold by one of his disciples.

Well, Joseph’s brothers sold him, and he was taken down to Egypt and there sold as a slave to an officer of the king of Egypt.

But God had planned that all this was to happen. It will soon be seen how the hand of God was leading Joseph.

Jacob was very sad when the bloody coat was brought to him. He believed Joseph was dead, and he mourned for him many days.

How lonely poor Joseph must have been as the band of men took him to Egypt! He was far away from his friends and home, but he had one friend who did not leave him. That friend was God.

His master's name was Potiphar, an Egyptian. Seeing that the Lord blessed Joseph and caused all that he did to prosper, Potiphar made Joseph overseer of all that he had. And God blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake.

One day his master's wife told things about Joseph that were not true, and he was cast into prison. God was with him even there; for he would not sin against the Lord, but did what was right. God is very near to those whose hearts are set to have nothing to do with what they know is wrong, and he blesses them.

Boys and girls who have decided to follow and trust in Jesus and keep away from every evil thing are, like older Christians, sometimes persecuted and in trouble; but if they are true to God, he will bring them forth in due time. He delivered Joseph, as we shall see presently.

Joseph In Prison.

BEFORE long the jailor saw by the way Joseph lived that he could be trusted and that God was with him and blessed him in whatever he did. So he made him overseer of the jail and gave him the care of all the prisoners. He had charge of everything done there.

God did not intend Joseph to be a slave, as his dreams when at home proved; yet he permitted it for a short time.

Among the prisoners were the king's butler and baker, who had offended their lord Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Both men had a

dream, and in the same night. In the morning when Joseph came in where they were, he asked why they were sad. They told him they both had dreamed and there was no one to tell them what their dreams meant.



JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BRETHREN.

Joseph said, "Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you. And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossom shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:

and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

"And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me



JOSEPH IN PRISON.

unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

"When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was

of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

“And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

“And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

“And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh’s hand: but he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.” Gen. 40:8-23.

The King’s Dream.

JOSEPH, by God’s help, had interpreted the dreams of both the butler and the baker. Everything came to pass just as Joseph said it would. One was hanged, and the other was placed back in the king’s service as he had been before.

It would seem that no one could forget the request Joseph had made to the butler, that he would help him out of prison. But the butler never thought of him until, at last, the king had a dream. “And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well-favored kine and fat-fleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favored and lean-fleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill-favored and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favored and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

“And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

“And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise



TELLING THE KING'S DREAM.

men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there were none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.” Gen. 41:1-8.

Then the butler remembered Joseph and told the king about him. Pharaoh sent at once for Joseph, and they took him out of prison. Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have heard say of thee, that thou canst

understand a dream to interpret it." Joseph answered, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

When Joseph heard the dreams, he said that the two meant the same thing. For seven years, he said, there would be plenty of everything, and then there would be seven years of famine in which there would be nothing raised to eat.

He told Pharaoh to appoint a man who was very wise, and have this man see that plenty of barns were built. Then they were to store away one-fifth of all that was raised during the years when there was plenty. This was to be used during the seven years of famine. Pharaoh was glad when he heard this, and he chose Joseph to be the man to see that these things were done. He said, "See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."

Again Joseph was made overseer, and this time of the whole land of Egypt. He feared God and trusted him. This was the secret of his success.

The Famine.

JOSEPH was about thirty years old when Pharaoh made him governor of Egypt. In the first seven years there was so much corn everywhere that it was as the sand of the sea. Joseph gathered it into barns until he could not number the amount.

When the seven years of plenty were ended, the famine began, and it was very severe. But all the time there was bread and corn in Egypt. This famine was not only in Egypt, but was in all the countries around; and there was nothing to eat at Joseph's old home. When his father Jacob heard there was corn in Egypt, he sent his ten eldest sons to buy some.

Joseph was the one to whom they came. They all "bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." This was the very thing Joseph, when he was a boy at home, dreamed that they would do. And that dream was one of the things that made them hate him so much.

Joseph knew his brothers, but he had changed so much that they did not know him. He called them spies, and said they had only come to see how little there was in the land. They told him they were not spies, but were one man's sons and twelve brethren. The youngest, they said, was at home with their father, and the other was not.

Joseph knew whom they meant by the one who "was not"; it was himself. But he did not let them know who he was. He, no doubt, wished to examine them further to see if they were still the same hard-hearted men they were when he was a boy.

He said that he would count them as spies unless one of them would go back and get their youngest brother and return with him. He put them all in prison, but on the third day he let them out. He told them if they were true men they should leave Simeon in the prison, and the rest were to carry back food to their father. He said they must bring their youngest brother, Benjamin, when they returned. This made them very sad.

"And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes." Gen. 42: 21-24.

Joseph had his brothers' sacks filled with corn, and gave orders to have the money they had paid put back in their sacks. When they got home and opened the sacks and found in them all the money they had paid for the corn, they were very much afraid.

Jacob refused to let them take their youngest brother, and they would not return without him.

Joseph Makes Himself Known to His Brethren.

WHEN the corn was all eaten and they were very hungry, Jacob at last said he would let them take Benjamin to Egypt with them. He also sent a nice present, with twice the amount of money they needed to buy corn, and the money they had found in their sacks, and said,



JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

“Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man.” They then went down into Egypt the second time.

When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin, he wept and had to leave the room.

He had a feast prepared, and his brothers ate with him. Still he did not let them know who he was.

When they were ready to go home, Joseph had all their money put back in their sacks again, and had his silver cup put in Benjamin's sack. He let them get started and then sent the one who had put the money into the sacks to follow them and say, "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good in stealing my master's property?" The steward did as Joseph commanded. When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, they were indeed sad, and with heavy hearts returned to the city.

Joseph told them he would keep Benjamin; but they said they could not return without him, for their father would die of grief, since he felt so keenly the loss of Joseph. When Joseph heard how his father still sorrowed for him, he could stand it no longer. Every one was sent out of the room, except his brothers. Then he made himself known unto them. And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

His brethren were at first frightened when they knew they were talking with their own brother Joseph; but he said: "Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

"For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

"Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's



JOSEPH INTRODUCING HIS FATHER TO PHARAOH.

children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast come to poverty.

“And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

“And he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.”
Gen. 45: 4-15.

Israel Leaves the Land of Canaan.

PHARAOH and all his servants were pleased when they heard that Joseph’s brothers had come. He told Joseph to send them back after their families and to have them return again, and said he would give them the good of Egypt and they should eat of the fat of the land.

Joseph gave all of them new clothes to wear, and wagons in which to carry the women and children and their father.

When they returned home and told their father that Joseph was still alive and of the many things that had happened, he could not believe them. But when he saw the wagons Joseph had sent, he felt it was true. He said, “It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive: I will go and see him before I die.”

It was a long journey for any one so old. God spoke to him on the way and said, “Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation.”

Pharaoh was very kind to them and had Joseph see after all their needs. Joseph promised his father that when he died he should be buried in the old family burying-place, where Isaac and Abraham were laid.

Shortly before Israel died, he blessed Joseph’s two sons, Ma-

nasseh and Ephraim. In the blessing he placed Ephraim before Manasseh. He said Manasseh the elder should be great, but Ephraim should be a multitude of nations. He said to Joseph, "God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers"—the land of Canaan, which country God had given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or Israel.

God Cares for the Children of Israel.

WHEN Israel died, his sons took him back to the land of his fathers and buried him. After their return to Egypt, fear came upon the brothers that Joseph would now do them some harm, since their father was dead. They sent a messenger to Joseph to beg him to forgive them for the evil they had done him when a boy.

It made Joseph weep, for he did not think of returning the evil. He said: "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly to them." Gen. 50:19-21.

When Joseph died, he was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt.

One night many years before what we are now reading about, when Abraham was asleep, God said to him: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Gen. 15:13-16.

God promised to deliver them and to bring them back to Canaan some day, which he did, as you will soon learn.

The Children of Israel.

MANY years had passed since the famine in Egypt. Israel and all his sons were dead, and there was another Pharaoh, or king, ruling, who was not kind to the people of God.

This new king did not know anything about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the many promises God had made to them, and how God had been with Joseph, or that these were the chosen people of God. Had he known all this, he would, no doubt, have been more careful how he acted toward them, and not been so cruel.

One thing Pharaoh knew. It was that the people of God were increasing very fast, and he was afraid they might join in war with other nations against Egypt. He said to his people, "Let us deal wisely with them." "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens." These taskmasters were so cruel and made them work so hard that their burdens were more than they could bear. They were forced to build two cities for Pharaoh to keep his treasures in. The names of the cities were Pithom and Rameses. They were built in that part of the country in which Joseph had said his brothers should dwell; for the king had told Joseph to give his people the best of the land.

"But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel."

Now the dream that Abraham had so many years before (Gen. 15:13-16) was coming to pass. The people of God were strangers in a strange land and were slaves. But God said he would judge Egypt and deliver his people; and you will soon see how it was done.

God chose a man of the name of Moses to take his people away; but many strange things were to happen before the right time should come for them to leave Egypt.

When Pharaoh saw that in spite of all he could do the people of God increased as fast as they had before, he said every son that was born to them must be thrown into the river and drowned. About this time a little son was born in the family of Levi. This little son

was Moses, and he was the one God had chosen to deliver his people.

For three months the mother of this child kept him hid. When she saw she could hide him no longer, she made a tiny ark for him and daubed it with slime and with pitch and put the child in it. Then she laid it in the flags by the river brink.

Moses Found.

WHEN Moses had been placed in the ark in the river, his sister named Miriam kept watch to see what would happen to him. Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to bathe. While she was bathing, she saw the little ark and sent her maid to fetch it. When the ark had been brought to Pharaoh's daughter, she opened it and saw the sweet little baby. It began to cry, and she loved the child. She knew it was one of the Hebrews' children (the children of Israel were also called Hebrews), but she could not bear to see it killed.

When Moses' sister saw that the babe was not going to be killed, she stepped up to the king's daughter and asked if she might go and get a nurse for it. She was told to go, and of course she got the baby's own mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to take care of it for her and she would pay her for doing so. This was the way the dear Lord took care of Moses.

When he was old enough, he was brought to the king's palace, and Pharaoh's daughter raised him as though he were her own son. Moses was taught in all the wisdom of Egypt, and trained for the great work which God had for him to do.

In Exodus 9:16 we read something God said about Pharaoh: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." So it was not strange that the very means by which Pharaoh thought to destroy the lives of the children should be used to deliver them from Egypt. He had said all the boy babies were to be thrown

into the river, and it was on account of this command that Moses was found in the river in the tiny ark that his mother had made for him.



THE FINDING OF MOSES.

Then, it was Pharaoh's daughter who took Moses as her own son and had him taught all the things he should know; and he grew to be a man in the king's palace.

Moses Leaves the House of Pharaoh.

MOSES lived in the house of Pharaoh until he was about forty years old. Then there came a time when he had to choose which he would do—enjoy the pleasures of sin and the nice things of Egypt, or part with them and go with the people of God. He knew what it meant to decide to go with God's people; for he could see how they were forced to work and suffer, but he knew that God was on their



ISRAEL'S SUFFERING, IN EGYPT.

side. This was enough for him, and he chose to go with them and serve God.

There is a time in the lives of all when God calls them to live for him, and they have to make a choice. They can stay in sin and

enjoy foolish pleasures for a while, or they can give up sin and choose the better part, as Moses did. They may suffer many things; but they have great joy and peace, and have the promise of a far better land than the children of Israel looked forward to.

Moses' faith was great and strong, but he had many things to learn. He wanted to help God, so he took the matter into his own hands for a short time. God meant to use him in delivering his people, but wanted them to be glad to be delivered and so let them suffer for a while.

The way Moses tried to help God was this: One day when he went out where some of his brethren were at work, he saw an Egyptian hurting one of them. "He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." Ex. 2:12.

After he had killed the Egyptian, he tried to have two of his brethren stop quarreling. The man who did the wrong became angry with Moses and said, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?" His people as well as Pharaoh seemed to have turned against him, but God had not. When Moses found out that people knew of his killing the Egyptian, he had to go away and hide.

Israel's Deliverer.

I wish to tell a story true
About a land and people too.
The lovely river Nile was there,
Which in my story has a share.
And it was there a tyrant reigned;
Though king, his hands with blood were stained;
And in this land so rich and great
Were captives doomed to awful fate.

This land was Egypt (did you guess?),
So comely clothed in nature's dress;

And these poor captives in this land
Were none but Israel's chosen band.
Since Joseph's death 'twas many years.
Poor Israel toiled through grief and tears;
And as they worked from morn till late,
They could but mourn their woful fate.

But God had blessed his people there,
Although they had such grief to bear;
And as their numbers fast increased,
The king feared lest they be released.
He said that something must be done,
Or they the land would overrun.
And thus it was this cruel man
Had thought of such a wicked plan.

He said that ev'ry baby boy,
If captive born, they must destroy;
Its little body all alone
Into the river must be thrown.
Just how this plan worked soon we'll see;
For later it brought liberty:
Through one of these same baby boys,
The hosts of Egypt God destroys.

It came about in just this way:
A Hebrew mother hid one day
Her baby in a basket queer,
And had her daughter standing near;
Then laid him in the river Nile,
And bade his sister watch the while.
This lady had not long to wait
To know her darling baby's fate.

'Twas Pharaoh's daughter came one day,
And with her maidens passed that way.
She stopped to bathe, but soon espied
The ark with its sweet babe inside.
The baby wept, which made her sad;

She saw it was a Hebrew lad.
She knew her father's stern decree;
Her heart was stirred with sympathy.

'Twas then the baby's sister came,
And said a nurse she'd quickly name;
And when the princess said, "Yes, go,"
She ran to let her mother know.
That mother's heart was full of joy
To have once more her little boy.
She cared for him until the day
He went to Pharaoh's house to stay.

The princess took him as her own;
No art so great but he was shown,
In wisdom none excelled him there;
In royal life he had his share.
Though there was much he could enjoy,
This did not Moses' mind employ;
He saw his brethren's misery,
And longed to go and set them free.

The wisdom gained of Egypt's ways
Helped Moses much in later days;
And when deliv'rance came at last.
The burden was on Moses cast.
And so the tiny Hebrew boy
The king had sought so to destroy
Was trained behind the royal wall,
But heard his loving Master's call.

The Burning Bush.

WHEN Moses left Egypt, he went into the land of Midian and stayed there. Those living in that land were not the chosen people of God, as the children of Israel were.



MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH.

Moses cared for the flock of a man of the name of Jethro, and married one of his daughters, whose name was Zipporah, and they had two sons. The name of the first was Gershom, which means "a stranger here"; "for," said he, "I have been a stranger in a strange land." The name of the second was Eliezer, which means "my God is a help"; "for," said he, "the God of my father was mine help and delivered me from the hand of Pharaoh."

How dark everything must have looked to Moses at this time! He could not see how he could ever help his people now, but God wanted him to become very humble so he would know that it was God who was doing the work, and not himself.

One day while he was caring for the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, a very strange thing happened. He was near a mountain called Horeb, and was all alone. All at once he saw flames coming out of a bush. He watched it, but the bush did not burn. Then he said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." Then he heard a voice, for "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I." Then God said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians." Ex. 3:7, 8.

"Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Ex. 3:10.

Signs Given to Moses.

MOSES had not forgotten how one of his brethren had spoken to him just before he left Egypt, saying, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" Ex. 2:14. Moses said to the Lord, "They

will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." The Lord then asked him, "What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod." God told him to throw it on the ground; and when he did so, it became a serpent; and Moses ran from it. God said to pick it up by the tail; and when he did, it became a rod again.

God said, "Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh." Ex. 4: 6, 7.

God then said, "It shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land."

Even after God had given him these signs, Moses was afraid to go and said he never could talk well. He said, "I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." "And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

Moses was still afraid to go, and begged the Lord to send some one more able to do the great work of delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt. "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

"And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

“And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.” Ex. 4:14-17.

Moses did not say any more against going, but started as soon as he could. “And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.” Ex. 4:21. “I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.” Ex. 3:19, 20.

Moses Returns to Egypt.

GOD told Moses that he could return to Egypt in peace, for all the men who wanted to kill him were dead.

There was now another Pharaoh, who was even more cruel than the one before him had been, and the way the children of Israel had to suffer was dreadful. Ex. 3:23-25.

God sent Aaron into the wilderness to meet Moses, and they were very glad to see each other. Moses told his brother Aaron of all the signs God had given. When they reached Egypt and told the children of Israel all about it, “the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped.”

Moses and Aaron then went to see Pharaoh and said, “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” They said the God of the Hebrews had met with them and they must go a three days’ journey into the desert to sacrifice to him.

God had said he would harden Pharaoh’s heart so that he would

not let the people go, and so it came to pass. Pharaoh said the people were not busy enough, and that was why they said, "Let us go and sacrifice to our God." He said, "Let there more work be laid upon the men."

Before this the people were given straw to make brick, but now they were forced to hunt for stubble and still make as many bricks as they had made before. When they could not make as many, they were beaten. Then they went to Pharaoh and asked him why it was. But Pharaoh said, "Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the full number of brick."

They met Moses and Aaron, who stood on the road, as they came forth from Pharaoh, and the people blamed them for making their work so much harder. Then Moses went to God and said, "Why is it that thou hast sent me? for since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all."

Then the Lord encouraged Moses and said, "Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

Moses and Aaron Visit Pharaoh.

THIS was a very discouraging time to the children of Israel; and when Moses went to encourage them, they would not listen.

When God said to return to Pharaoh again, Moses said, "Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me?" But God told him to go and take Aaron and when they were asked to show a sign or miracle they should cast the rod before Pharaoh and it would become a serpent.

This was done. Then Pharaoh called his wise men, and they did the same thing, and each of their rods became a serpent. "But

Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." Still Pharaoh would not let the people go, for his heart was hardened.

The water in all the rivers and streams was then turned to blood, and they had to dig wells to find water to drink; but Pharaoh still refused to send the people away.

Then frogs were sent in such large numbers that they were in the Egyptians' houses, beds, ovens, and everywhere. Then Pharaoh begged Moses to take the frogs away.

Next the dust of the land was turned into lice, and lice were upon man and beast. The wise men said, "Surely this is the finger of God," because they were unable to do the same; but Pharaoh would not listen to them.

Swarms of flies were then sent, so that they were everywhere in great numbers, except in the land of Goshen, where God's people dwelt; there were no flies there.

Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and told them to have their people sacrifice unto the Lord in Egypt, but Moses said this would not do; they must go three days' journey into the desert. Pharaoh at last said they might go, but must not go far. He asked Moses to entreat the Lord to take away the flies. The Lord removed them in answer to Moses' prayer; but Pharaoh's heart became hardened again, and he would not let the people go.

Then a disease was sent among the cattle. This disease killed all the cattle, except the part belonging to the children of Israel.

Also, ashes were sprinkled in the air, and the ashes caused great sores to come on every person or animal that they touched.

Then hail was sent, which killed every plant, animal, and person that was in the fields. But it did not hail in Goshen.

Again Pharaoh said he would let the people go and that they should not stay there any longer; but as soon as the rain and hail ceased, he hardened his heart again and refused to let them go.

God then told Moses that he was showing these signs so that some day they might tell their children of his mighty power.



AARON'S ROD BECOMES A SERPENT.

More Signs Given.

AGAIN the Lord sent Moses and Aaron in before Pharaoh. This time they said that if he refused to let the people of God go and sacrifice, locusts would be sent to eat up everything that the hail had not destroyed, and that these locusts would be worse than any he had ever seen.

Pharaoh's servants begged him to let the people go, and asked if he did not know that Egypt was destroyed already. Pharaoh said the men of Israel might go, but the women and children must stay.

Then "Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

"And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

"For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt." Ex. 10:13-15.

Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron in haste and said he had sinned against God and his people, and asked to be forgiven.

But as soon as God sent a strong west wind, which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea, so that not one locust remained, his heart was hardened again, and he would not let the children of Israel go.

Darkness then came upon the land and the Bible says, 'it was darkness which might be felt.' "They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

"And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.

“And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither.

“But the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die.

“And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.” Ex. 10: 24-29.

The Passover and the Last Plague.

“AND the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence.”

It would seem as though there was little else that could be done, after all the plagues that God had sent on these people. But one more was to be sent.

The Lord told Moses and Aaron to call all the people of God together and tell them to choose on the tenth day of the month a lamb for each family and to keep it until the fourteenth day. Then they were to kill the lamb at sunset and take some of the blood and put it above and on each side of the door of each of their houses.

God told them just how the lamb was to be roasted, and that they must eat it in haste, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and were to burn all of the lamb that might be left. When they ate it, they were to be dressed ready to start on their journey.

It was the Lord’s passover; for he said he would pass through the land of Egypt that night, and would smite or kill all the first-born there, both of man and beast. “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I

will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

The children of Israel had seen what awful things were happening in Egypt; and they must have been sorry that they had not had more faith in Moses, for this time they bowed their heads and worshiped and did as Moses and Aaron said.

God told them that after they left Egypt they should always keep the service of the Lord's passover, and that when their children asked why they did it they must say, "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.

"And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." Ex. 12: 29, 30.

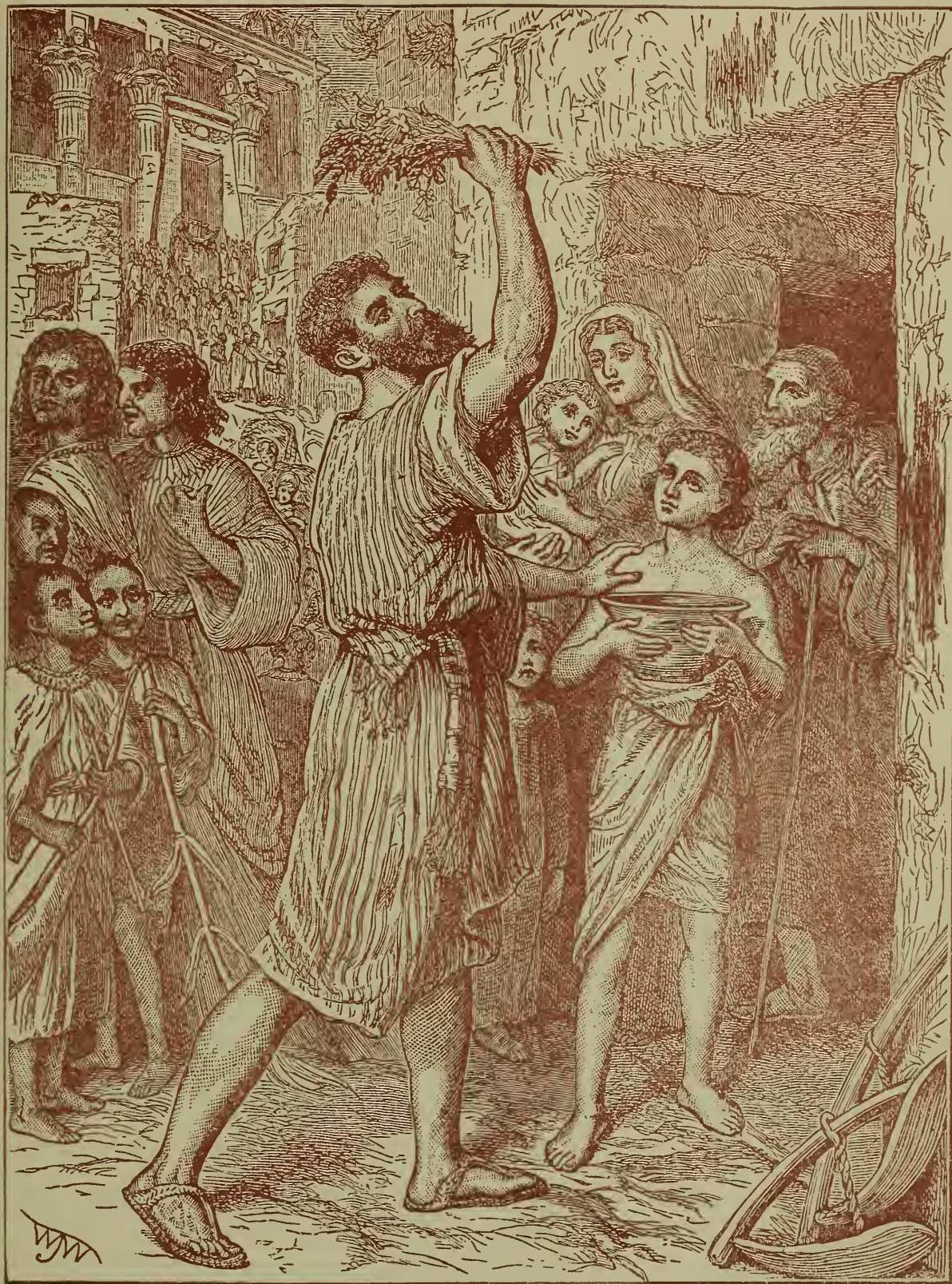
Pharaoh was forced to see God's power in so many ways that at last he said the people must all go and serve the Lord, and to go at once.

Pharaoh asked Moses to bless him before he went. He seemed for a moment to realize that he needed God's blessings; just as Esau did after he found that his father had blessed his brother Jacob. Pharaoh saw what a terrible thing the wrath of God was.

The Egyptians hurried the children of Israel in leaving so that they had no time to get ready. They asked of the Egyptians many things they would need on their journey, however, and the Bible says, "They spoiled the Egyptians."

The children of Israel had been in Egypt a great many years, and the night they left was one long to be remembered. The feast of the passover and unleavened bread was a very sacred time to the Jews, and they kept it year after year, as Moses said they should.

"Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten



THE SPRINKLING OF BLOOD.

seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.

“And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

“And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord’s law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt.



THE PASSOVER.

“Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.” Ex. 13:6-10.

It was right and necessary that the Jews should do this as long as they continued to be the nation and people of God. But when

Jesus died as a sacrifice for all who would believe on him, he became the true passover. Jesus, then, is our sacrifice, and is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

The Israelites Leave Egypt.

WHEN God's people left Egypt, he did not lead them through that part of the country where the Philistines (a warlike nation) lived; for he said his people might become afraid when they had to fight, and would return to Egypt. "But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.

"And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: he took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people." Ex. 13:19, 21, 22.

After they had left Egypt, God told Moses that Pharaoh's heart would again be hardened and he would follow and try to take them back with him; but God would prove that he was the Lord.

When Pharaoh found out that the children of Israel were really gone, he said he ought not to have let them go. So he started after them at once with a large army. They overtook the Israelites as they were camping by the Red Sea.

Again the people of God blamed Moses for getting them into greater trouble than they had been in, and said it would have been better to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." Ex. 14:13, 14.

Although the people blamed Moses for all their troubles, his faith in God did not fail. He knew from whence his help must come, and so in faith cried to God. The answer was, "Go forward."

This is God's command to his people to-day. They must not stop because the way seems hedged up before them; God can make a way when there is no way.

"Have faith in God,
And forward move;
Stretch forth thy rod,
'Twill God's strength prove."

Crossing the Red Sea.

WHAT a moment this must have been to them! In front the waters of the Red Sea, and behind the angry army of Pharaoh. But Moses told them to keep quiet, and the Lord would fight their battles.

God said that Moses should lift up his rod and stretch it out over the sea. This time the water does not turn to blood; instead the water divides and rolls back, and a nice path is opened before them.

Another wonderful thing happened. The angel of the Lord, who had been leading them, turned and now went behind; and the cloud that went before them was now placed between them and the Egyptians, to whom it did not give any light, but God's people could see all right.

"And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

"And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

"And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians



ISRAEL PASSING THROUGH THE RED SEA.

said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

“And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

“But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

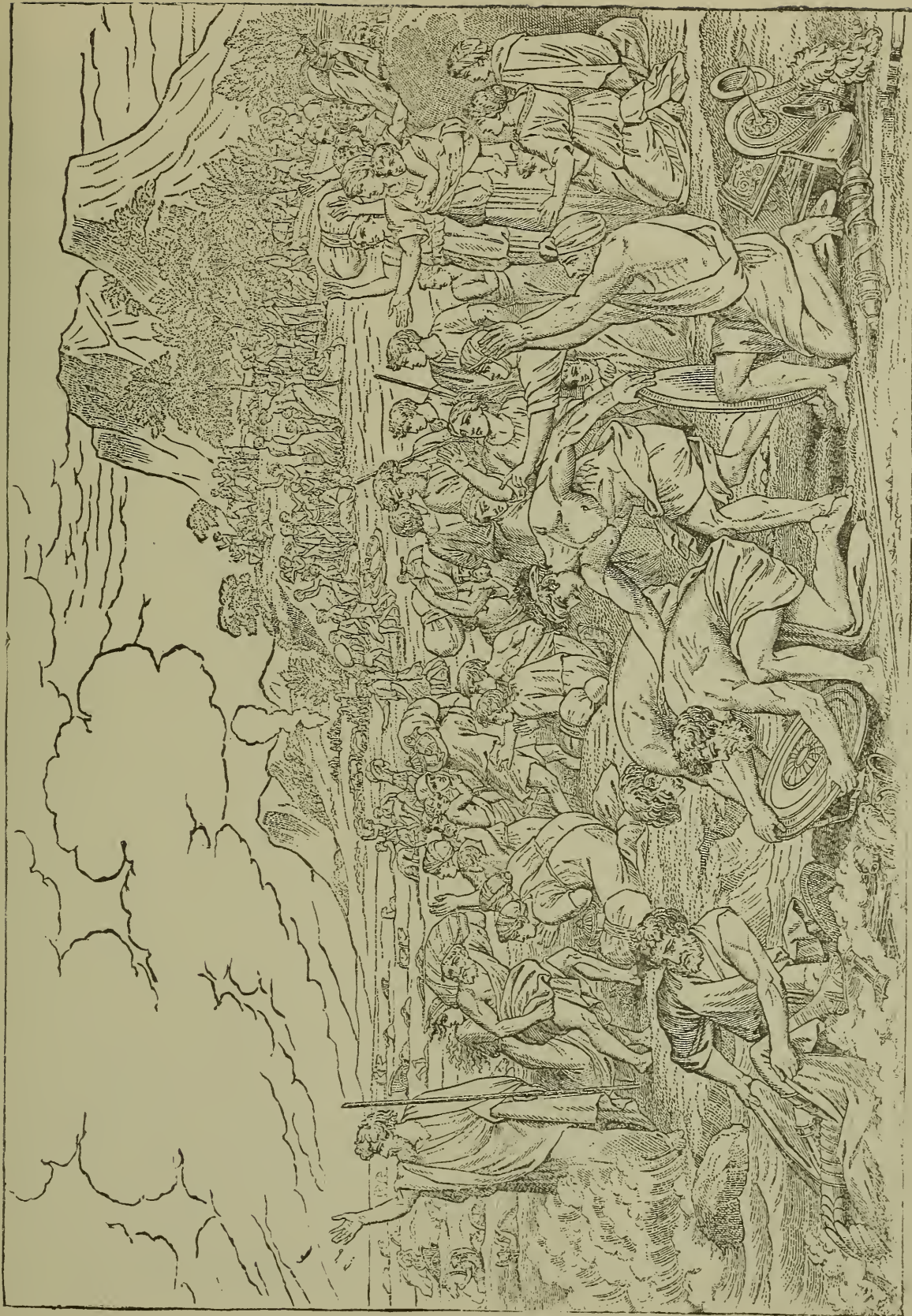
“Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.” Ex. 14: 22-31.

Great Rejoicing.

NOW that God had brought his people safely to the other side of the Red Sea and they could look back and know their enemies were destroyed in its waters, they were very happy. Now they believed God and Moses, and could see it was the Lord's hand that was leading them.

Moses and the children of Israel sang a song of praise to God. After repeating all the wonderful things he had done, they said, “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

They had great reason to praise God; but they were going to meet some trials, as will soon be seen.



THE EGYPTIANS DROWN IN THE RED SEA.

All went well until they became thirsty and could find no water; then they began to complain again and blame Moses.

They at last found some water, but it was bitter, and they could not drink it. God showed Moses a tree, which, when he had cast into the water, made it good to drink.

God then told them that if they would keep his commandments and do what was right, he would not put upon them the diseases which had been brought upon the Egyptians, but he would be their healer.

Then they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water and seventy palm-trees, and they encamped there by the waters.

In the Wilderness.

AS the people of God went on through the desert, of course many things happened. Sometimes they would rejoice, when they saw that God was blessing them. But they would forget these blessings in a very short time, and then they would find fault with Moses and Aaron for taking them away from Egypt.

At one time they were very hungry and said, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." How unkind and unbelieving it was of the people to talk this way after God had done so much for them!

The Lord told Moses that he had heard what the children of Israel had said and that he would give them meat and bread to eat.

"And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

"And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.

"And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto



STRIKING THE ROCK.

them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.”
Ex. 16:13-15.

They were to gather just enough of the manna to last one day. But on the sixth day they were to gather enough for two days. God told them there would not be any manna on the seventh day. He gave them that day to rest in, and called it the Sabbath.

There was a strange thing about the bread, or manna, that God gave them. He had told them to gather a certain amount for each day. If they gathered more or less, they had only enough when it was measured.

Some who doubted that it would come again tried to save a little over until the next day; but it spoiled and became wormy. On the sixth day they gathered twice the amount, and it kept nicely. The Lord did not send any manna on the seventh day, or Sabbath.

This manna was like a round white seed, and the taste of it was like a thin cake made with honey.

Moses told Aaron to put some of it away in a golden pot; then their children could see it in after years and know how God had fed his people in the wilderness.

God Helps in Every Time of Need.

AGAIN the children of Israel came to a place where no water could be found. This time there was not even bitter water to be made sweet. They seemed to forget everything God had done for them, and were almost ready to kill Moses because he had brought them to that place.

Then Moses prayed, and God told him to strike a large rock with his rod, and water would run out of the rock.

Some people came to fight with the children of Israel. These people were called Amalekites, and were descended from Esau, Jacob's brother. They were the first enemies that fought against Jacob's descendants. God made Israel fight their own battle this time; but



AARON AND HUR HOLD UP THE HANDS OF MOSES.

their victory was gained only as the banner or rod of God was faithfully held above them.

Moses took Aaron and Hur and went up on the top of a hill. Then he held the rod and both hands up toward heaven. As long as he did this, the victory was on Israel's side; but the battle was long and his arms became tired. When he let his hands down, then Amalek had the victory. So Aaron and Hur held his hands up for him until the battle was won.

Jethro Visits the Children of Israel.

MOSES' wife, Zipporah, did not understand the great work God had called her husband to do. She had returned to her father Jethro and taken their children with her.

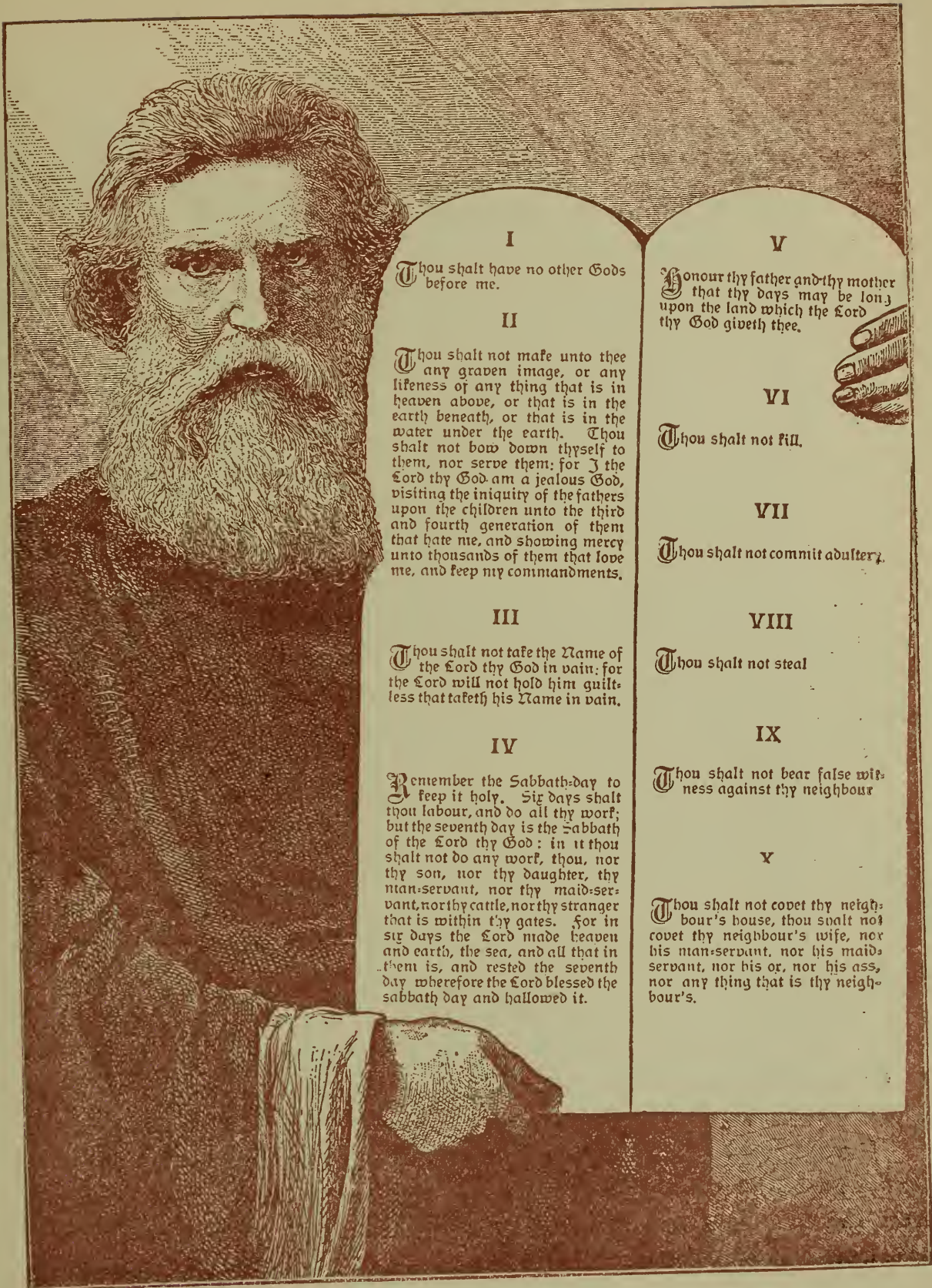
When they heard of the way God had delivered Israel out of Egypt and of the many miracles that had been done, Jethro took her and her two sons and brought them to Moses.

Jethro was glad for all the goodness of God to Israel and said, "Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians." Then they offered sacrifices to God.

Jethro saw how much work Moses had in judging the people and telling them what to do; so he told him to choose men who feared God and have them help him in this matter. Moses did as his father-in-law said, and chose able men "and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves."

In this way Moses proved his meekness. He was willing to receive instruction from any source. A wise man will receive instruction and be still wiser, but a fool hateth instruction.

Afterward Jethro returned to his home, and the children of Israel went on toward the desert of Sinai.



I

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

V

Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Mount Sinai.

THE people were now near the place where God had talked to Moses out of the burning bush. The Lord was going to talk again, but this time he would be behind a cloud.

He came down upon Mount Sinai and then called Moses, "and Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

"And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord." Ex. 19:3-9.

Then he went down and gathered the people together at the foot of the mountain, and God spoke to them the ten commandments.

There was thunder and lightning, and the mountain trembled and seemed to be on fire. When the people saw this and heard the voice of God, they were very much afraid and said to Moses, "Speak thou thyself, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." Ex. 20:19-21.



MOSES BEHOLDING ISRAEL'S SIN.

He remained forty days and nights up in the mountain alone with God. During that time he neither ate nor drank.

When God finished speaking to Moses, he gave him two flat pieces of stone on which he had written the ten commandments.

It was not strange that the people should wonder what had become of Moses. After he had been up in the mountain for some time, they chose Aaron for their leader and said to him, "Make us gods, which shall go before us."

It seems strange that after all God had done in their midst they should be so unbelieving. They forgot the living God and his commandments, and began to worship an idol that could neither hear nor speak.

To please them, Aaron had taken some of their jewelry and made a calf of gold and set it up; then all the people danced and sang before it. While they were doing this, Moses came down out of the mountain, and oh! how sad he must have felt to find them worshiping this golden calf!

Well, it was more than he could stand, and he became very angry with them. He threw down the tables of stone and broke them; then he took the golden calf and burned it and ground it up until there was nothing left but a fine dust. This he put in water and made the people drink of it.

Moses begged the Lord to forgive the sin of the people. The Lord did so, but not before many had died because of their sins.

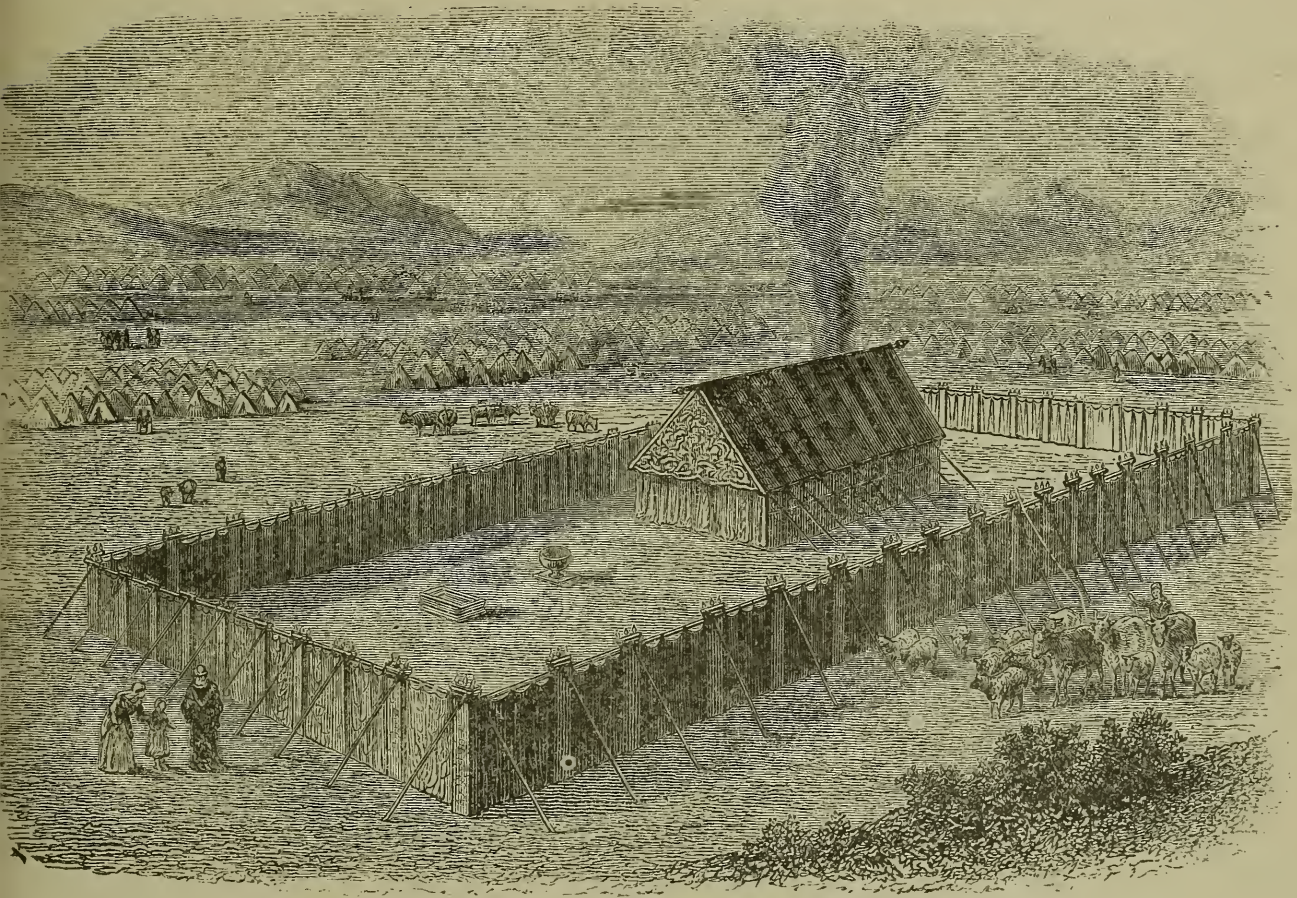
Two more tables of stone were made, on which the ten commandments were again written. These ten commandments or words were called the covenant or words of the covenant. God said they were to obey these, or they could never enter the land they were seeking.

God always blesses people who do his will. His commandments are not a burden to those who love him. We should love God and obey all the commands he has given to us. They are for our good and his glory. If we trust and obey him, heaven will be our eternal home.

The Tabernacle.

WHILE in the mountain, God showed Moses the pattern of a tabernacle, or house, which he told him to have the people make.

This house was to be the place where God would dwell among, and meet with, his people. It was to contain two rooms, with a yard, or court, around it.



THE TABERNACLE.

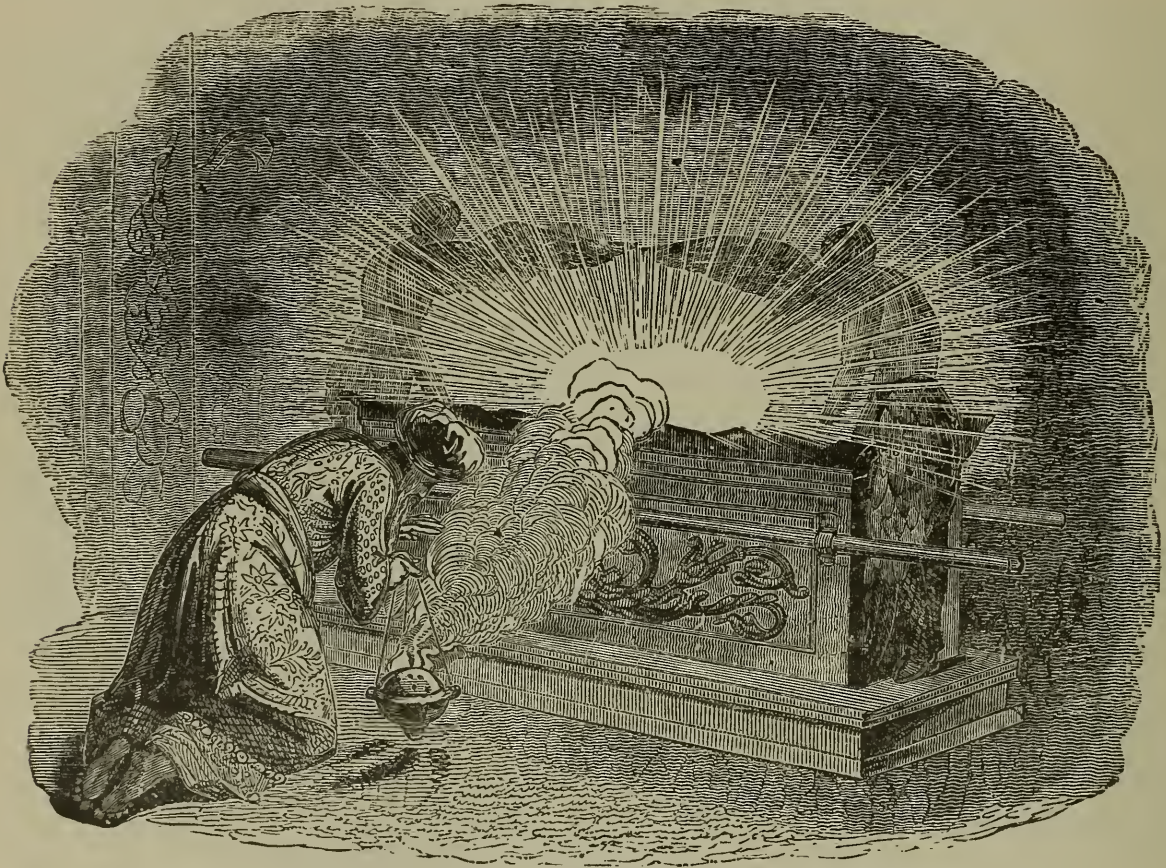
The people could go into the court, but no one, except the priests, was to enter the two rooms of the tabernacle. The priests were men specially chosen for that work.

God said that Aaron and his sons should be the priests. They were to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people, present gifts to the Lord, and burn incense before him.

There were altars for this purpose; one in the court, and one in the first room of the tabernacle.

The altar in the court was made of wood covered with brass. Here the priests offered sacrifices daily for the sins of the people.

The altar in the first room, called the holy place, was also made of wood, but covered with gold. Upon this altar the priests burned incense. This incense was made by mixing some spices with the



THE HIGH PRIEST IN THE HOLIEST OF HOLIES.

gum of certain trees. When it was burned, a sweet smell arose. It was to be burned every night and morning, and was like the prayers of God's people, which come up before him as incense.

In the first room was a golden candlestick or lamp-stand, on which lamps were kept burning all the time.

A table also was there, which was covered with gold, and which

held the shew-bread. This bread was freshly baked every Sabbath and placed in two rows upon the table. There were twelve loaves—one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. When fresh loaves were placed on the table, the others were eaten by the priests.

Into the second room, called the holiest of holies, none but Aaron the high priest could enter. This room contained the ark of God's covenant, or the ten commandments. This was a chest or box covered inside and outside with gold. It contained the tables of stone on which were written the ten commandments that God gave to Moses in the mountain.

The lid of this ark was covered with pure gold, and was called the mercy-seat. This mercy-seat was now to be God's throne. From there he would make known his will and rule his people. Above the lid were two angels or cherubim made of pure gold, one at each end. Their wings covered the mercy-seat as if they were guarding the sacred place.

A beautiful curtain, called the veil, hung on four pillars, between the two rooms of the tabernacle. Another curtain formed the door from the court into the first room.

The tabernacle was to be made in such a way that it could be taken down and carried with them when they went from place to place. The tribe of Levi was chosen to set it up, take charge of and carry it. God told Moses that for the building of the tabernacle he had chosen Bezaleel and Aholiab and had given them wisdom that they might know how everything should be made.

Moses told the people all that God had said to him in the mountain.

“And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

“The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for

all manner of work, which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses." Ex. 35:21, 29.

They brought much more than enough. "For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much." So Moses told them to not bring any more.

When all things were finished and it was set up, God came and dwelt within it as he had said he would do.

The cloud which had been their guide thus far now rested above the tent and the glory of God filled the tabernacle. When he wanted them to move in their journey, the cloud would rise up from over the tabernacle; and where it stopped, there they encamped, for it was their guide. Thus God led his people through the wilderness.

The People Complain.

ALTHOUGH the Lord had given his people all they could eat while in the wilderness, they were not satisfied.

The manna did not taste as good to them as it did at first. They seemed to forget how much suffering they had endured in Egypt and only remembered the different kinds of food they had eaten there.

Then they cried and said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna before our eyes." Num. 11:4-6.

"Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased. And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?"

"Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not

able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." Num. 11: 10, 11, 13-15.

Moses must have been very much discouraged to talk to the Lord in this way. But God had promised to care for these people, and did so even though they found fault with the way he did it.

God gave the people flesh, but his wrath was kindled against them because of their greediness. "And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp." Num. 11: 31, 32.

Moses had wondered how the Lord could give the people enough meat to last a whole month, but it was not a hard thing for God to do. "He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." Psa. 106: 15.

People who murmur or complain never prosper in their souls. These things displease God, for they destroy that which is precious in his sight—love, joy, peace, gentleness, kindness, patience, faith; these are the things he loves and delights to see in our hearts. He bids us do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be blameless and harmless.

God also sent help to Moses, for he really had too many cares resting upon him. He told Moses to choose seventy men; and when they were gathered together, the Spirit of the Lord came upon them and they prophesied.

Two of the number, Eldad and Medad, for some reason, did not get to the tabernacle, but they prophesied.

Moses here again proved his humility; for when the people wanted him to forbid these two to prophesy because they had not been with

the others, he said he would be glad to see all Israel prophets and the Spirit of the Lord resting upon them.

About this time Moses counted the people and found there were 603,550 men over twenty years of age. As we shall find later on, only two of this number, Caleb and Joshua, were allowed to enter the land of Canaan, because all the rest found so much fault with God's way of leading and delivering them.

Spies Are Sent.

GOD told Moses to send men over into Canaan as spies, to see what was there. And so he chose a man from each tribe and "sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: and see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds; and what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes." Num. 13:17-20. "So they went up and searched the land."

"And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

"The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

"And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.

"And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

“And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.” Num. 13: 23-28.



THE SPIES RETURN FROM CANAAN.

When the children of Israel heard that the people were strong and that fierce nations dwelt in the land, they were afraid and felt that they should never be able to possess it.

Joshua and Caleb tried hard to quiet the fears of the people, but the other spies said they saw giants there and that they themselves

were as grasshoppers before them. Then the courage of the people sank, and they wept all that night.

The people again began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and said to one another, "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt."

Then Joshua and Caleb, who "were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.

"If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

"Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.

"But all the congregation bade them stone them with stones. And the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.

"And Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;) and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou Lord art among this people, that thou Lord art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by daytime in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

"Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.

"Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people,

from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word." Num. 14:6-16, 19, 20.

But God said that none of those who were over twenty years of age should be permitted to enter the land of Canaan, except Joshua and Caleb. "But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness." Num. 14:31, 32.

When Moses told the people what the Lord had said, they were very sorry and decided that they would go into the land regardless of what God had said.

Early the next morning they started to go. Moses told them not to go, for God would not go with them; but the people would not listen and went. "Nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them and discomfited them, even unto Hormah." Num. 14:44, 45.

God was very angry with the children of Israel at this time and would have killed them all, had not Moses prayed so earnestly for them.

In answer to Moses' prayer, God said that when all those whom Moses had numbered the first time were dead, then their children should go and dwell in the land he had meant to give to their fathers. And this is why the children of Israel wandered around in the wilderness for forty years.

The Rebellion of Korah.

SOME of the people became jealous of Moses and Aaron. They could not see why only Aaron and his sons should be priests.

So one man of the name of Korah, who was a Levite, but not a priest, rose up before Moses, and with him Dathan and Abiram and

a number of people, who felt as he did. Korah said to Moses and Aaron: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?"

"And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: and he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.

"And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?"

"And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?"

"For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" Num. 16: 3-5, 8-11.

After this when Moses sent word for Dathan and Abiram to come, they said, "We will not come up: is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?" Num. 16: 12, 13.

When Moses saw how they felt and all they were doing against God, he was much displeased. Remember, it was God who had given Moses and Aaron their work to do.

Korah no doubt thought he and his sons had as much right to be priests as Aaron had; and the Reubenites felt that they had more, for Reuben was the eldest son of Israel.

Moses told the people to all come to the tabernacle, and there God would show who should be priest.

When they were all gathered together, the Lord told Moses and Aaron to go to one side and he would destroy the people in a moment,

for they were allowing themselves to feel as Korah and his company did. But Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces and prayed earnestly that God would have mercy and not do this.

Then the Lord told them to bid the people get away from those wicked men, or they would die with them.

“And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me.

“But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.

“And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

“They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

“And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.” Num. 16:28-35.

The Lord told the people to always remember what had happened to Korah and his company, and never do as they had done, or sympathize with any one acting in that way. But very soon after this, the people found fault with Moses and Aaron and said, “Ye have killed the people of the Lord.”

God then sent a plague among them, which came very near destroying all of them, but Moses and Aaron prayed so earnestly that some of their lives were spared.

The plague did not stop until fourteen thousand and seven hundred had died, “beside them that died about the matter of Korah.”

Aaron's Rod.

“AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

“And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

“And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

“And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

“And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

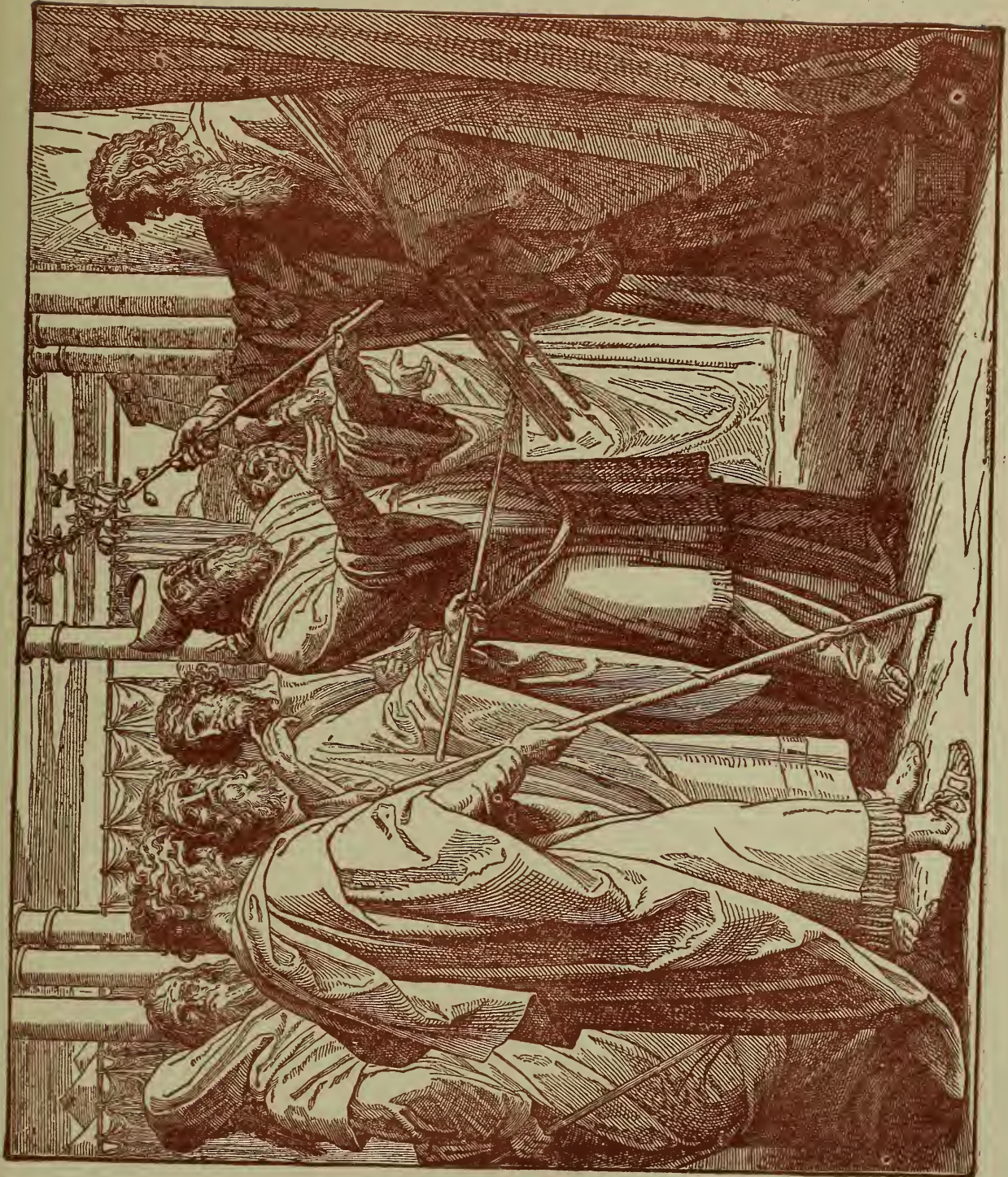
“And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness.

“And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

“And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not. And Moses did so: as the Lord commanded him, so did he.

“And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?” Num. 17: 1-13.



AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDED.

Thus the Lord put an end to all the disputing about who had the right to the priesthood.

The Lord told Aaron that he should not have an inheritance in or part of the land to which they were going, for, said God, "I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel."

The Forty Years' Wandering.

DURING the years the children of Israel were wandering about in the wilderness, many things happened.

God commanded them to keep the feast of the passover each year. This they did in remembrance of the night they left Egypt. That night the death angel had passed over them without harm, but had brought death to every Egyptian's house. Num. 9:1-5.

The Lord commanded Moses to make two silver trumpets. These were to be used for many purposes, such as calling the people together, or warning them of danger.

"And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations. And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." Num. 10:8, 9.

At one time Miriam and Aaron found fault with Moses and thought they were able to do his work. The Lord heard what they said and called them before the tabernacle.

"And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

“And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed.” Num. 12:6-9.

When Aaron looked at his sister, he saw she was covered with a dreadful disease called leprosy. Any one that had this disease was sent away into a lonely place to dwell and die.

Leprosy is like sin; it eats into the flesh as sin does into the soul. Only God’s power can heal it, and his power only can remove sin.

Moses prayed that God would heal Miriam, and his prayer was answered; but she was shut outside the camp of Israel for seven days. Then she returned and the children of Israel continued their journey.

At last they came to Kadesh, and here Miriam died. This was the place from which Moses had sent the spies nearly forty years before. All those who had been unbelieving and disobedient at that time were now dead.

Moses and Aaron were very old and could not live much longer; but God meant to show Moses, before taking him, the land he had been seeking all these years.

Just before Aaron died, Moses sent men over into the land of Edom. This was the country where the descendants of Esau lived.

“And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us: how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers:

“And when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border:

“Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king’s highway, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

“And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.

“And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the highway: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet.

“And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.

“Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.” Num. 20:14-21.

Although the Edomites refused to let the children of Israel pass through their land, Israel did not dare to fight against them; for God commanded that they should let them alone. “Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.” Deut. 2:5.

The Lord also gave the command not to fight with the Moabites. “And the Lord said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession.”

But they had no command that would keep them from fighting with the other nations.

Aaron's Death.

THE children of Israel were now soon to be in sight of the great and beautiful land God had promised them; but because of the trouble at Meribah God had said that Moses and Aaron could not lead the people across the river.

Miriam was dead, and now the time had come that Aaron must die.

“And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto Mount Hor.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given

unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.

“Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto Mount Hor: and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there.

And Moses did as the Lord commanded: and they went up into Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.

“And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.

“And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.” Num. 20: 22-29.

Israel Marching to Canaan.

IT is very interesting to follow the march of the children of Israel, when every day's journey brought them nearer to the land of promise. To them it was a place of beauty and hope; for they had long seen nothing but the wilderness.

As they marched along and were forced to fight with their enemies, God gave them the victory as long as they obeyed and trusted him.

When they came to the land of the Amorites, who were descendants of Canaan, Israel sent messengers to their king, saying, “Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: but we will go along by the king's highway, until we be past thy borders.

“And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel.

“And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong.

“And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof.

“And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there.

“And they turned and went up by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he, and all his people, to the battle at Edrei.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

“So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.” Num. 21: 22-25, 32-35.

This was what Moses had prophesied in his song just after they crossed through the Red Sea. Ex. 15: 14-17.

This land in which the Amorites dwelt, and which Israel took from them because they would not let them go through it, had once belonged to the Moabites. But it had been taken from them in battle. It did not belong to them at this time, and so Israel was clear in taking it.

Later the tribes of Reuben and Gad asked that they might have this as their part of the promised land, and it was given them.

The wilderness life of Israel, with all its hardships and sorrows, was now nearly ended. They stood almost ready to enter the land of Canaan. Still they were to have many fierce battles before they could possess the land, and must pass through the river Jordan.

As a holy secret was hidden behind the veil of the holiest of holies in the tabernacle, just so we can draw a lesson from the way God led the children of Israel.

In the first place, they were in cruel bondage to a wicked king. This is the way with the sinner to-day. He is in bondage to sin, and his king is Satan.

Jesus came to deliver sinners from Egypt, or sin; but Satan will not let them go until they reach the Red Sea, or blood of Jesus.

His blood separates them from sin and Satan as the Red Sea separated the Israelites from the land of Egypt and their former life of bondage. But like the children of Israel, who journeyed through a wilderness toward the land which God had promised them, the Christian must press on to obtain the blessing God has promised him.

This blessing and rest is a spiritual one. Like the pardon of sins, it is received through faith in Jesus. In the Bible it is called by different names, such as the "gift of the Holy Spirit," "Christ in you," "a pure heart," "sanctification."

The Israelites had to overcome and destroy their enemies through the power of God before they possessed their inheritance, the promised land. The enemies of the one whose sins are forgiven but who is not yet sanctified wholly, are the evil feelings and desires of the old nature.

This old nature must be put off and cleansed away by faith in the blood of Jesus, before the Christian can possess the holy land of spiritual Canaan. This is Beulah land, where the soul is very happy, for Jesus dwells in the heart.

Balaam and the Angel.

WHEN Balak, king of Moab, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, he was afraid they would do the same to him. There are so many of them, said he, they will "lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field."

There was a man named Balaam, who belonged to the Midianites, a nation living close by. He was a kind of prophet and magician.

Balak sent to this man and said, "Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt; behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too many for me."

But God said to Balaam, "Thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed."

Balaam refused to go when the Lord told him this, but Balak sent for him again. He promised Balaam to make him a rich and great man if he would just curse that people.

Balaam said it would make no difference how much wealth would be given him, he could speak only the words God would give him. However, he wanted the riches so much that he went.

God was angry because he went, and sent his angel on before him; "and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.

"And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

"But the angel of the Lord stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.

"And the angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.

"And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.

"And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay.

"Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the



BALAAH MEETS THE ANGEL.

angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.

“And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: and the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.

“And Balaam said unto the angel of the Lord, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.

“And the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.” Num. 22: 22-35.

When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he was glad and went to meet him; but Balaam told him he could only say the things God told him to say.

Balak took him to three different places where he could see all the hosts of Israel. At each place Balaam prophesied a blessing rather than a curse.

He also prophesied of the coming of Christ. “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.”

Balak was so angry that he sent Balaam home without making him rich or great as he had promised to do.

Balaam was finally killed in battle, when Israel fought against the Midianites.

Balaam was a very strange man. In a way, he can be compared with Judas, the apostle who betrayed Christ. Both followed the truth to a certain extent.

Balaam acknowledged the God of Israel, while Judas went so far as to become a disciple of Christ. But when the testing time came, both loved riches better than the Lord.

They both stood at the place where they had to choose either the

right or wrong way. And sad as it seems, both chose the way that soon ended their lives.

Balaam knew God said he would not curse Israel. It was money that tempted him to take the course he did. And it was money that tempted Judas to betray his Master. The love of money is truly a root of every kind of evil.

In Sight of the Land of Promise.

MOSES was now very old, and was the last of those whom God had said must die in the wilderness. He had brought the people within sight of the promised land. Now to enter, they had only to cross the river Jordan.

God told him to number the people again; for these had not been counted when the people had been numbered before in the wilderness.

There were over six hundred and twenty-six thousand men, besides the women and children. A very great company indeed.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.

“And thou shalt put some of thine honor upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

“And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.

“And Moses did as the Lord commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: and he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.” Num. 27: 18-23.

Then God told Moses what the people were to do after he died. He told him just how the land was to be divided. The Levites were

to have no inheritance or part of the land, but certain cities were to be set apart for them to dwell in.

These cities, forty-eight in number, were to be scattered throughout the other tribes. This was in order that they might keep the people in remembrance of their duty toward God.

Six of them were to be cities of refuge for the children of Israel and for the strangers who might dwell among them. To them every one could flee that killed any person by accident. There they could stay until the death of the high priest, when they were set free and could go where they chose.

Death of Moses.

ALL was now ready. Moses had given all of God's commandments to the people. Now God told him to go up into Mount Nebo.

Moses knew he was going to die; for God had told him all about it. The Lord said that before Moses died he should see all the land the people would soon possess.

All his life his care had been for Israel, and he was faithful to them even unto his death. His last desire was that God would set over the people a man who would be a true shepherd to them.

Joshua had been chosen, and then Moses sang a song of thanksgiving and praise to God. He thanked him for all his loving and tender care, and for the way he had led them through the wilderness. Deut. 32:1-43.

Then Moses blessed all the people, each according to the tribe to which he belonged.

He closed the blessing by saying, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

"Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

“Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho.

“And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan. And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

“And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

“So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

“And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

“And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.” Deut. 33:27-29; 34:1-8.

Joshua Takes the Place of Moses.

NOW that Moses, their leader, was dead, Joshua took his place. He tried to do his work just as he thought Moses would have done it, and obeyed all the commandments of God.

But “there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and

in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel." Deut. 34:10-12.

The Lord said unto Joshua: "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Josh. 1:2, 3, 5, 7.

Then Joshua commanded all the people to get ready, for in three days they would pass over the river Jordan and possess the land.

"And they answered Joshua saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.

"Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage." Josh. 1:16-18.

Joshua then sent two men as spies to Jericho. He did not tell the people what he had done. Perhaps he was afraid they might feel as their fathers did forty years before.

The spies went and entered the house of a woman of the name of Rahab, who hid them.

"And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

"And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: and it

came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

“But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

“And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

“And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; and she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

“For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon, and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

“And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.” Josh. 2:3-11.

She said she would help them to escape if they would promise to save her life and the lives of her people. The men promised they would do so if she would not utter a word of their business.

They told her that when the children of Israel came into the land, she must hang a red cord from her window. She was also to be sure to have her relatives with her in the house.

She then let them down by a rope through the window; for her house was upon the town wall.

The men hid in the mountain three days and then returned to the camp of Israel.

They told Joshua all that had happened and said, “Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.”

Crossing Jordan.

“AND it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; and they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

“Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

“And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

“And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee.

“And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

“And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above: and they shall stand upon an heap.

“And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

“And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

“About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.



CROSSING THE JORDAN.

“And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.” Josh. 3:2-8, 13, 17; 4:9, 13, 18.

God said to choose twelve men, one from each tribe, and have them each take a stone from the river. These stones they were to carry on their shoulders and leave in a heap in the place where they stayed that night.

“And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

“And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

“For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever.” Josh. 4:20-24.

When the Canaanites heard that Israel was really on their side of the river Jordan and how they came to be there, they were afraid. “Their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.”

The feast of the passover was then kept in memory of God’s great goodness and love.

The day after this feast the Lord stopped sending the manna, for there was plenty of food in that country.

Then Joshua went up near Jericho to see what would be the best course to take to destroy it.

As he came near the city, a man met him who had a sword in his hand, and Joshua asked him if he were a friend or an enemy.

The man said, “As captain of the host of the Lord am I come.”

Then Joshua fell upon his face and worshiped him, for he knew this was an angel from the Lord.

Then the same words were spoken to Joshua that Moses heard from the burning bush. Josh. 5:15.

How happy he must have been to know the same Lord was leading him that had led Moses for so many years!

The Lord said to Joshua, "I have given into thine hand Jericho."

The City of Jericho.

JERICHO was a beautiful city and was very strongly built. Great, high walls were all around it.

The people within these walls saw and heard of the wonderful things the Lord was doing for Israel. As Israel came closer, great fear settled down upon the people in Jericho.

Still they meant to resist as long as they could. They shut up the gates of their city securely, and "none went out and none came in."

But even though they were inside these great walls, it was an easy matter for God to sweep them all away before his host.

The angel of the Lord who had talked with Joshua told him just how he should do to take Jericho.

The people were to march around the city once every day for six days. The armed men were to go first, then seven priests with trumpets, next the ark of the covenant, and last the rest of the people.

The priests were to blow with their trumpets, but the rest of the people were not to speak a word.

The seventh day they were to march around the city seven times; and when the priests blew a long blast with the trumpets, all the people were to shout. Then the walls of the city would fall down before them.

They were commanded not to leave any one alive, except Rahab and her people. She was to be saved because she had helped the spies to escape.

Everything belonging to the people in Jericho was to be destroyed, except things made of silver, gold, brass, or iron. These were to be kept for the Lord's use in the tabernacle. God was to fight this battle, and it was right that he alone should have the honor.

What a strange sight it must have been to the people inside Jericho! They could see the people marching around their city day after day. All were ready for battle, and no one spoke a word.



MARCHING AROUND JERICO.

On the seventh day they went around seven times. Nothing strange happened until the seventh round, then at the command of Joshua all the people shouted with a great shout.

What a sight! Down went the great walls, and Jericho was taken.

When the battle ended, Joshua supposed that everything was destroyed, except what the Lord had told them to save. Joshua also said that if any one ever tried to build Jericho again, he would be cursed. Five hundred and twenty-two years later a man of the name of Hiel did rebuild Jericho and suffered because of it. 1 Kings 16:34.

The City of Ai.

THIS city was much smaller than Jericho, but it was built upon a hill. Joshua sent men to see if it would be hard to take.

When they returned, they said not to let all of the people go, for two or three thousand men would be able to take the city. They said there was no need of making the rest work so hard.

No doubt they thought that as Jericho had been taken so easily, they would have success on every hand. If all the people had been true to God, this would have been so.

We do not read that Joshua looked to the Lord for any special leading in the matter. He did as the men had said and sent only three thousand men. But oh! what defeat!

The people of Ai came out and drove them back, and about thirty-six of the children of Israel were killed.

When Joshua heard what had happened he "rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of Jordan!

"O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? And the Lord

said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" Josh. 7:6-10.

The Lord then told Joshua why they had been driven back.

"Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.

"Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

"Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.

"In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which the Lord taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the Lord shall take shall come by households; and the household which the Lord shall take shall come man by man.

"And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel." Josh. 7:11-15.

Achan's Sin.

IN the morning Joshua rose up early and called the people before him. Tribe after tribe was called, and the tribe of Judah was taken. When Achan, who belonged to this tribe, came forward, the Lord said he was the man.

"And Joshua said unto Achan. My son, give, I pray thee, glory



ACHAN CONFESSING HIS SIN.

to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

“And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

“So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord.

“And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

“And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

“And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.” Josh. 7:19-26. It is an awful thing to disobey God.

When Achan was killed, the anger of the Lord ceased. He said to Joshua: “Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: and thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.” Josh. 8:1, 2.

This time Joshua followed closely the directions of the Lord. He

divided his army. Part of the men went behind the city and hid, while the rest went with Joshua.

Joshua said his part of the army would go up just as the three thousand had one. Then the king of Ai would think he could easily drive them back, as he had the other army a short time before; but while the king would be pursuing these, the rest of the army, who had been hiding, should come and take the city, for the Lord would deliver it into their hands.

“And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the Lord shall ye do. See, I have commanded you.” Josh. 8:8.

It was as Joshua said. When the people of Ai saw the children of Israel coming again, they thought there was nothing to fear. They hurried out to fight against them and left their city unguarded.

When Joshua held out his spear, the men who were hiding behind the city went in and set fire to it. Only the cattle and goods were saved, as Joshua had commanded.

The king of Ai was hung on a tree and then thrown where the gate of the city had been. A great pile of stones was placed over him, and this heap was all that remained of Ai. It was never rebuilt.

An Altar Is Built in Mount Ebal.

BEFORE Moses died he said that when the children of Israel were safe in the land of Canaan, they should go up in Mount Ebal, and there they should set up large stones for an altar and cover them with plaster.

Upon these stones Joshua was to write the ten commandments. They were to be written very plainly, so that all the people could read them.

As soon as they came to Mount Ebal, Joshua did all that Moses had commanded.

“And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

“And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests the



JOSHUA BUILDS AN ALTAR IN MOUNT EBAL.

Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

“And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings

and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

“There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.” Josh. 8:32-35.

What a solemn and grand scene this must have been! God had led them as he had promised, and now his holy law was written where all could read it.

They were gathered in the valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. From this place they could see the beautiful land, which was now their own.

Abraham saw this same land. Gen. 12:7. God had told Abraham that his children some day would live there and would be many, as the sand of the sea. This had come to pass. The great host of Israel was there.

At this place Jacob first lived after he returned from his uncle's, in Haran. Gen. 33:19. Abraham and Jacob had each built an altar here, and now one was built by the children of Israel. Here they vowed that the Lord would be their God forever.

Marching into Canaan.

When God brought Israel back again,
Away from Egypt's toil and pain,
He gave them each a home so free
In Canaan's land of liberty.

How happy must have been that day
Which they had hoped for all the way,
To know their bondage days were o'er,
And soon they'd be on Canaan's shore.

Though Moses was not of the band
To enter in this happy land,

Yet God permitted him to share
From Nebo's heights a glimpse most fair.

He saw the land he long had sought,
He saw the people he had brought,
And then he knew that he must die,
But Moses did not question why.

He sought the man with father's care
His great commission there to bear.
His work was done, his toiling o'er;
But Israel's grief was great and sore.

Although at times they did rebel,
Yet Israel loved their leader well;
But now they said they would obey,
And Joshua leads them on their way.

Of course, foes in the way were met,
Their lives with hardships oft beset;
But God was helping, this they knew,
And he would guide them safely through.

At last on Jordan's banks they stand,
The old and young view Canaan's land;
And then the waters grandly roll;
Dry-shod they pass, and reach the goal.

The wilderness is left behind,
Its manna now no more they find;
And they did not forget to thank
The Lord upon that Jordan bank.

An altar of twelve stones placed there,
In after years told of God's care.
Some spies sent forth to view the land,
Returning said, "'Tis simply grand!

"Reports," they said, "have reached them here,
Which all their hearts have filled with fear;

"Tis that all foes, both great and small,
Before our host have had to fall."

What courage did these words impart,
Both to the brave and faint in heart!
'Twas then God called them forth to go,
And said he'd lead them 'gainst the foe.

Their enemies were strong inside
The walls, which rose up high and wide;
But God who led this army great
Made Jericho soon meet its fate.

God said to march around the wall
For seven days, then it would fall;
As this great host marched silently,
The sneering foe methinks I see,

Who view again their wall so high;
They do not see destruction nigh.
But Israel saw it fall at last,
When they gave forth the trumpets' blast.

Oh, what commotion! what dismay!
Befel the city there that day.
The hosts of Israel filled the place,
And met their foe there face to face.

God cursed the city and the spoil,
And said, "Take nothing for your toil."
But there was one who thought to hide
Some articles he found inside.

God always knows what we're about,
And thus he pointed Achan out.
This man knew it was wrong to steal,
And that was why it made him feel

That he must hide the things he'd taken;
But God knew where, O guilty Achan!

God said that Achan they must burn,
That Israel might a lesson learn.

How sad it was that this should be
The ending of such victory!
But God will punish in some way
At all times those who disobey.

Once more the great host pass along;
Their hearts are filled with joy and song.
The Canaanites depart in fear
As they see Israel drawing near.

'Tis true a few some trouble gave,
And thought their country they would save;
But they soon numbered with the slain,
While Israel's host marched on again.

At last on Ebal's heights we see
This great host gathered quietly
To listen to the words that fall
From Joshua's lips for great and small.

Their leader then with greatest care
An altar to their God built there,
And all this host with one accord
Made off'rings there unto the Lord.

Then Moses' law most carefully
Was written so that all might see,
And each command and ev'ry word
In Moses' law this people heard.

Had Abraham beheld this sight,
We can imagine his delight;
Here was the seed which God had giv'n,
They truly were as stars of heav'n.

And now we'll leave this mighty band,
To each receive his share of land;

We'll praise God for his loving care
In bringing them to Canaan fair.

And when we find them later on,
We hope they've kept all they have won;
That in their hearts the God of heav'n
Is praised by them for what he's giv'n.

The Men of Gibeon Deceive Israel.

WHEN all the nations in the land saw what God was doing for his people, fear fell upon them. Some were brave enough to fight, but only to be destroyed.

The city of Gibeon was close by; and when the people there heard what had been done to Jericho and Ai, they made a plan to deceive Israel.

"They did work wilily and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

"And they went to Joshua unto the camp of Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us." Josh. 9:4-6.

Strange as it seems, Joshua believed what these people said and made a covenant of peace with them and let them live.

He did not go to God and ask what to do at this time, as he should have done. In three days he found out his mistake.

These people were some of the inhabitants of the land, whom he was to destroy. But he had promised in the Lord's name to let them live.

Now, to break his promise with them would be worse than his having failed to ask wisdom from God at the first. So he told them they must be Israel's servants.

And Joshua said, "Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God."

They answered that it was because they had heard what great things God had done for the children of Israel. They had done this that they might live, and now would do anything that seemed right in his sight. So the lives of these men were spared, and they became Israel's servants.

The wrong Joshua had done in not asking the Lord what he should do led him into this error. But he had promised in the Lord's name and to break his word would have been another evil.

A promise in the sight of God is very binding. We should respect our word and keep our promises.

Many years after, when Saul was king, he thought he would do something for God. So he slew some of the Gibeonites. After he was dead there was a famine in the land. King David asked God what it meant. The Lord answered, "It is for Saul, and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." 2 Sam. 21:1.

Joshua Rescues Gibeon.

GIBEON was a city much larger than Ai. When the kings of the Amorites heard that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel, they decided to destroy the Gibeonites if they could.

So five Amorite kings joined themselves together and went up to fight against Gibeon.

The Gibeonites sent at once to Joshua for help. God told Joshua to go and to fear them not; for they were delivered into his hand, and none should stand before him.

Joshua went; Gibeon was saved; and God's Word was fulfilled.

The Amorites had surprised the Gibeonites, but now the children

of Israel surprised the Amorites. Many of them were slain; and as some ran from Israel, God cast down great hailstones from heaven upon them. "They were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children slew with the sword."

Then something happened that was never heard of before or since.

Joshua saw that the day was going to be far too short for him. He must conquer these armies now. So with faith in the God who had rolled back the waters of the Red Sea and of the river Jordan, Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still.

He said, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon: and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

"And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord harkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." Josh. 10:12-14.

The five Amorite kings hid themselves in a cave when they saw that the battle went against them.

Joshua heard they were there and said, "Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to keep them: and stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the Lord your God hath delivered them into your hands." Josh. 10:18, 19.

When the battle was over, they took the five kings out of the cave and hanged them on trees. But before they were hanged, Joshua told the captains of the men of war to put their feet upon the necks of these kings. Then he said, "Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight."

After the kings were dead, Joshua put them in the cave again and placed large stones at the mouth of the cave.

Thus the children of Israel continued to fight against their enemies. God gave them the victory until they possessed the land.

Many fierce battles had to be fought, and no city tried to make peace with them, except the city of Gibeon.

“And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

“And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.

“There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.” Josh. 21:43-45.

Joshua's Work.

THE work God called Joshua to do was to finish what Moses began. He was to lead the people of God through the river Jordan, into the land they had been seeking all these years.

Then he was to lead and direct them, and help them to drive their enemies out of it. These enemies were very fierce and warlike, as has been seen. But God put such fear in their hearts that it did not take long to cast them out.

He was also to give the people the laws Moses received from God. These were to teach them, and their children after them, what to do and what not to do.

These were to them a Bible, or God's Word. This Bible was composed of the first five books of our Bible. They are called the five books of Moses, or the Pentateuch.

His last and greatest work was to divide the land by lot between the tribes of Israel. Josh. 14:2-5.

In dividing the land, the tribe of Levi was not given a share with the other tribes; but as Joseph's portion was divided between his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, there were twelve tribes still.

The Levites were given cities among the tribes to dwell in. In this way the Levites would be able to advise and direct Israel in spir-

itual matters and help them remember God's goodness in the past.

There were six cities of refuge appointed according to Moses' command. These were cities to which any one could run who had through accident killed some person. There he could stay until it was safe to return home. Josh. 20.



THE CITY OF REFUGE.

When he was dividing the land, Caleb reminded him of what Moses had said at the time he and Joshua returned with the other spies. Josh. 14: 6-14.

Caleb was not one of the children of Israel by birth, but had been adopted among them and was what is called a proselyte. It was for his trueness to God and his people that he received part of their land.

The children of Joseph were not quite satisfied with what they received. It seems the Canaanites who had dwelt in their part of the land were a very strong people. Some giants, too, were among them, and they had iron chariots.

These people dwelt in the valley and mountain, and at first the children of Joseph had not been strong enough to drive them out. Later, when able to do so, they did not. Instead they let them stay and pay tribute. This made their land seem too small.

They then went to Joshua and said, "We are such a great people and the Lord has blessed us so, we must have more room."

Joshua told them that if they must have more room they should drive the Canaanites out of their country.

He used their own words against them, saying, "Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: but the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong."

Joshua's Work, and His Death.

THE great work of dividing the land of Canaan between the children of Israel was over at last. Nine and a half of the tribes had received their share west of the river Jordan; while the other two and a half tribes had theirs on the eastern side, where Moses had given it to them. And the land rested from war.

The men who had been so faithful and had left their homes to see their brethren safe in their land were now called. Joshua told them that they had done all Moses had commanded them. Num. 32:20-27. Now they were free to go home to their own inheritance on the east side of the river; only they must never forget God, who had done so much for them. After Joshua blessed them, they went away.

Soon after they had crossed Jordan they did something that

seemed very strange to the other tribes. They built a large altar. This made Joshua and others think they were forsaking God.

The Lord had said to all Israel: "Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord; even that man shall be cut off from among his people." Lev. 17:8, 9.

And their tabernacle was now on the west side of Jordan, so they sent Phinehas, a priest, to see what this great altar meant. He took a prince from each of the ten tribes with him.

When they asked why this altar had been made, they found it was not as they had feared.

These men said they were afraid their children might forget what the Lord had done for their fathers. "This altar," they said, "is a witness between us and you and our children after us that we all have a right to worship the Lord."

When Phinehas and the princes heard this, they were pleased.

A short time before Joshua died, he called all the children of Israel and had a long talk with them. He spoke of the goodness of God and reminded them of the many things the Lord had done. He also spoke of Terah, Abraham's father, who had served other gods.

He then told them to choose whom they would serve. And the people said, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey."

Joshua set up a great stone under an oak-tree and said it should always be a sign that they had chosen to serve God.

Then all the people went to their homes, and Joshua's work was ended. After these things he died and was buried. He was one hundred and ten years old when he died.



The Children of Israel in Trouble.

FOR a time after Joshua's death Israel kept their promise and served God; but a few of their enemies were still left in the land.

God told them to drive these out; and as long as they tried, God helped in destroying them. But soon they grew tired and stopped fighting.

They even made friends of these enemies, and did not destroy their idols. For this God was very angry, and said he would let them fight their own battles. This made them sorry, but they were not sorry long.

It was only a short time till they were even worshiping the idols they had not destroyed. These idols were named Baal and Ashtaroth.

Then the Lord was angry indeed. When their enemies came against them, he would not help them, and they were taken captive.

Wherever they went, and whatever they did, they found trouble. When they repented and asked God for help, he always sent it. But they would forget the Lord as soon as their trouble was ended. Then God would let them suffer on account of it.

God's way of helping the children of Israel was by raising up judges to rule over them. These judges were not always spiritual, but God used them in helping his people out of their trouble—that is, when the people were sorry and asked for help.

Each one can not be mentioned, but we will tell of a few things some of them did.

About twenty years after the death of Joshua many of the children of Israel were taken captive by the king of Mesopotamia. God permitted them to stay there for eight years, because they had forgotten him.

The idols they had not destroyed had become a snare to them.

Now that trouble had come upon them, they remembered that God had been their help.

Then they cried unto the Lord. He heard and sent a deliverer, even Othniel, Caleb's nephew. Through this man's work God delivered Israel, and for forty years they had rest from war.

Ehud and Shamgar.

AFTER Othniel died, the people again disobeyed God, and were taken captive by the king of Moab. They were his servants for eighteen years.

When all went well with them, they forgot God. Trouble seemed the only thing that would then cause them to turn to the Lord.

They had become so mixed up with the nations around them that they hardly knew right from wrong.

But now they were in such trouble that they cried to God for help. He heard their cry and sent them another judge, whose name was Ehud. He was left-handed and of the tribe of Benjamin. By him the children of Israel sent a present to Eglon, the king of Moab. But Ehud made a dagger and hid it under his clothing.

After he had delivered the present to the king, he said, "I have a secret errand unto thee, O king." The servants then passed out and they two were left alone.

When Eglon arose out of his seat to hear the message, Ehud drew out the dagger with his left hand and thrust it through the king's body. He then locked the door and hurried away.

When the servants tried to get in, they found the door locked. They supposed the king wanted to be alone and so did not enter. But after waiting a long time they unlocked the door and went in.

What a sight met their eyes! Their king was lying dead before them. And Ehud had escaped while they tarried.

Ehud had returned to the children of Israel and told them that God had given them the victory over the Moabites.

He then led them to war, and that day about ten thousand men of the Moabites were slain.

Thus God delivered his people once more, and they had rest from war about eighty years.

Shamgar was the next judge over Israel. This time their enemies were the Philistines. He "slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad: and he also delivered Israel." Judges 3:31.

Deborah and Barak.

ISRAEL'S fourth judge was a woman of the name of Deborah, and she was a prophetess. Her tent was under a palm-tree, and here was where the children of Israel came to be judged.

They had been wicked again, and God had let a king of Canaan make slaves of them. They had served for twenty years and now were sorry they had done wrong. They cried unto the Lord, and he heard, and answered by sending a deliverer, whose name was Barak.

One day Deborah sent for Barak and told him he must go and fight against the Canaanites. This meant a great deal, for Sisera, the captain of the Canaanites, was a brave and strong man, and he had nine hundred iron chariots.

Deborah told Barak that God would deliver Sisera and his army into his hand, but that he would not have the praise of Sisera's death. Sisera would be killed by a woman, Deborah said; and it was so.

Barak was afraid to go and said he would not unless Deborah would go with him. So Deborah went. And they had an army of ten thousand men.

God gave them the victory, and all of Sisera's army were slain, except Sisera. He left his chariot and ran to the tent of a Kenite woman of the name of Jael.

Sisera supposed this woman was his friend, but she was not, although she pretended to be.

He was so tired that he lay down and went to sleep. While he was asleep, Jael went to him and drove a great nail into his head, and he died.

When Barak passed by, Jael told him to come in and she would show him the man he was seeking. And when he came into her tent, behold Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temple.

So the children of Israel were set free from the king of Canaan.

Then Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God for delivering them.

It was forty years before they had war again.

How much better it would have been, had they driven all of their enemies out when God first commanded them to.

Idol-worship was what caused God to send such dreadful punishments upon them. His help was ever ready when they asked him for it and turned away from idols; but as soon as they forgot the Lord, he sent trouble to them.

Idols are something the Christian can not have. They do not need to be made of wood and stone to be idols. Anything the Christian is not willing to give up to the Lord becomes an idol. And the Bible says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5:21.

Gideon Destroys Baal.

AGAIN the children of Israel did evil in God's sight, and they were taken captive by the Midianites. These people were very cruel and drove them from their homes and cities. Everything planted was destroyed, and God's people had to seek homes in dens and caves in the mountains.

Again they cried to the Lord, because they were in trouble.

God sent a prophet who told them of God's mercies in the past and how they had disobeyed.

Then an angel came and sat under an oak-tree near where a man of the name of Gideon was. Gideon had a little wheat, which he was trying to thresh and hide from the Midianites. And the angel said unto him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor.

"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

"And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

“And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.

“And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.” Judges 6:13-16.

Gideon begged the angel to wait until he could go and prepare a present for him. This was some bread, meat, and broth.

When he returned with the present, the angel said to lay it upon a rock and pour the broth over it. When this was done, “the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.” Judges 6:21.

Gideon now knew he had been talking with an angel and felt that he was going to die. But God said, “Fear not: thou shalt not die.” Then Gideon built an altar in that place.

God told him to go and destroy the altar of Baal, which was in his father’s yard, and to cut down the grove that was around it. He was then to build an altar unto the Lord and offer a burnt-sacrifice, using wood from the grove which he had cut down. Gideon took ten men with him, and all this was done.

In the morning when the men of the city saw their idol and grove destroyed, they were very angry. Joash, Gideon’s father, was told to bring his son out that they might put him to death. But Joash said, “If Baal is a god, he can plead for himself. If any one will plead for him, he shall be put to death.”

Joash then changed Gideon’s name to Jerrubbaal, saying, “Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.”

The Army of Gideon.

GIDEON wanted to be sure that God meant to use him in delivering Israel. So he asked the Lord to do a miracle for him as a sign.

He said he would place a fleece of wool out on the ground. In the morning if this wool was wet with dew and the ground dry, he



GIDEON AND THE FLEECE OF WOOL.

would know God would save Israel by him. "And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

“And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.” Judges 6:38-40.

This was enough, and Gideon was satisfied. He blew a trumpet, which gathered the people together, and they prepared for battle.

Then “the Lord said unto Gideon, the people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

“And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

“So he brought down the people unto the waters: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

“And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

“And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.” Judges 7:2-7.

That night God told Gideon to take his servant and go down among the army of the Midianites, which were without number, and there he would hear something that would encourage him.

That night he went and overheard a man say, “Behold, I dreamed

a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came into a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

“And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the



GIDEON AND HIS ARMY.

sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

“And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshiped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

“And he divided the three hundred men into three companies,

and put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

“And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.” Judges 7:13-18.

The three companies of men did just as Gideon told them, and fear fell upon the Midianites. They thought a great army was upon them and they fled. Thousands of them were slain, and Israel was made free.

When the battle was over, the people wanted Gideon to be their king. But he said, “I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.”

Jephthah's Rash Vow.

MANY years after the death of Gideon there was a very brave man of the name of Jephthah. He had left his home on the east side of Jordan in Gilead because his brethren did not like him.

His brethren were glad to see him go, but now they were in trouble and needed help. The Ammonites, who were descendants of Lot, had come upon them, and said that the land east of the Jordan where the two and a half tribes were living belonged to them, and that they wanted it.

Jephthah said to his brethren who sent for him, “Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?”

His brethren said they saw their wrong, and if he would be their captain and they should have victory in battle, he should be their ruler when they returned. So Jephthah went with them.

Before going to war he sent messengers to the king of Ammon,

saying, "What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?"

"And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands again peaceably." Judges 11:12, 13.

Jephthah sent word that the land Moses had taken east of the Jordan did not belong to the Ammonites at that time, and said, "I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon."

The king of Ammon would not listen, nor make peace; so the children of Israel went to war.

As Jephthah was leaving home, he made a vow to God that if he was victorious he would give as a sacrifice to God whatever should meet him first upon his return home. It was very unwise for him to make such a vow. He did not know who or what might come to meet him.

When the battle was over and Jephthah returned home, the first to meet him was his own daughter. She was his only child; and when he saw her and remembered his vow, he rent his clothes. He told her the cause of his grief; but she said to do as he had promised, only to let her have two months to weep and pray.

Jephthah was very sorry of the rash vow he had made; but the Bible says he did as he had promised.

All the young women of Israel mourned for her four days out of each year. There is no place in the Bible where it is even hinted that God approved of Jephthah's vow.



Samson and His Riddle.

THE children of Israel had again forsaken God and were serving idols. And now they were in bondage to the Philistines.

An angel one day came to a man of the name of Manoah and told him that he and his wife were going to have a son.

The angel said the child must be brought up for the Lord, and that they must never cut his hair, for he was to be a Nazarite to God. There was a special law given to the Nazarite. It is found in the sixth chapter of Numbers.

When this child was born, God blessed him, and he grew to be very strong.

When he became a man, he saw among the Philistines a woman whom he loved very much. His parents tried to have him marry one of his own people, but they did not know that God was going to use this very thing to help in their deliverance.

Samson went with his father and mother to see this woman, and just before he reached her home, a lion rushed out and roared at Samson. He had no sword, but God gave him strength, and with his hands he killed it as easily as though it had been a young goat.

His father and mother did not know about the lion, and he kept it a secret.

He did not marry the woman at this time, but returned home again.

Later he went to be married, and on his way "he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion. And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

"So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

"And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

"And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto

you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty sheets and thirty change of garments: but if ye can not declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth the riddle, that we may hear it.



SLAYING THE LION.

“And he said unto them, Out of the eater cometh forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

“And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson’s wife, Entice thy husband that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father’s house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so?

“And Samson’s wife wept before him and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee?

“And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the children of her people.

“And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

“And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father’s house.

“But Samson’s wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.” Judges 14:8-20.

Samson’s Strength.

IT was some time before Samson returned to his wife. When he did, he found her married to another man. This made him very angry, and he “went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.

“And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

“Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire.

“And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.” Judges 15:4-8.



SAMSON SLAYS THE PHILISTINES.

While Samson was on this rock, the tribe of Judah came to him and asked, “Why hast thou brought all this trouble upon us?” for the Philistines, who were their rulers had come up against them. Samson said, “As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.”

“And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said

unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.

“And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

“And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.

“And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.

“And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramathlehi.” Judges 15:12-17.

When Samson had finished slaying the Philistines, he became very thirsty and would have died for want of water; but God in answer to his prayer made a place from which water came out. After drinking of it Samson felt refreshed.

He called the spot Enhakkore, which means “the well of him that called, or cried.”

And he judged Israel twenty years.

Delilah's Deceit.

THE Philistines tried every way to catch and bind Samson, but his strength was so great they could not.

One time when they knew he was in a certain city, they shut the gates and thought he could not get out. But he took the gates of the city upon his shoulder and went away with them.

At last they went to a woman whom he loved and said, “Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we



DELILAH DISCOVERS THE SOURCE OF SAMSON'S STRENGTH.

may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

“And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

“And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

“Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

“Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

“And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

“And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

“Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

“And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

“And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

“And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.” Judges 16:5-15.

She pressed him daily with her words and urged him, so that at last he told her he had always been a Nazarite and his hair had never



SAMSON CAPTURED BY THE PHILISTINES

been cut. He said, "If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

It was wrong for Samson to tell this, for the woman was not his friend.

"One day while he slept, she had his hair cut; and she called to him, saying, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.

"But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house." Judges 16: 20, 21.

Blind Samson.

POOR Samson! This was a sad thing to come upon him; but, of course, the Philistines would show him no mercy now.

They praised Dagon, their god, for delivering Samson into their hands; and whenever they saw Samson, they were happy.

Samson had grieved the Lord by telling Delilah that his strength was in his hair. He became very sorry and prayed to God, whom he had disobeyed, and from whom his strength really came.

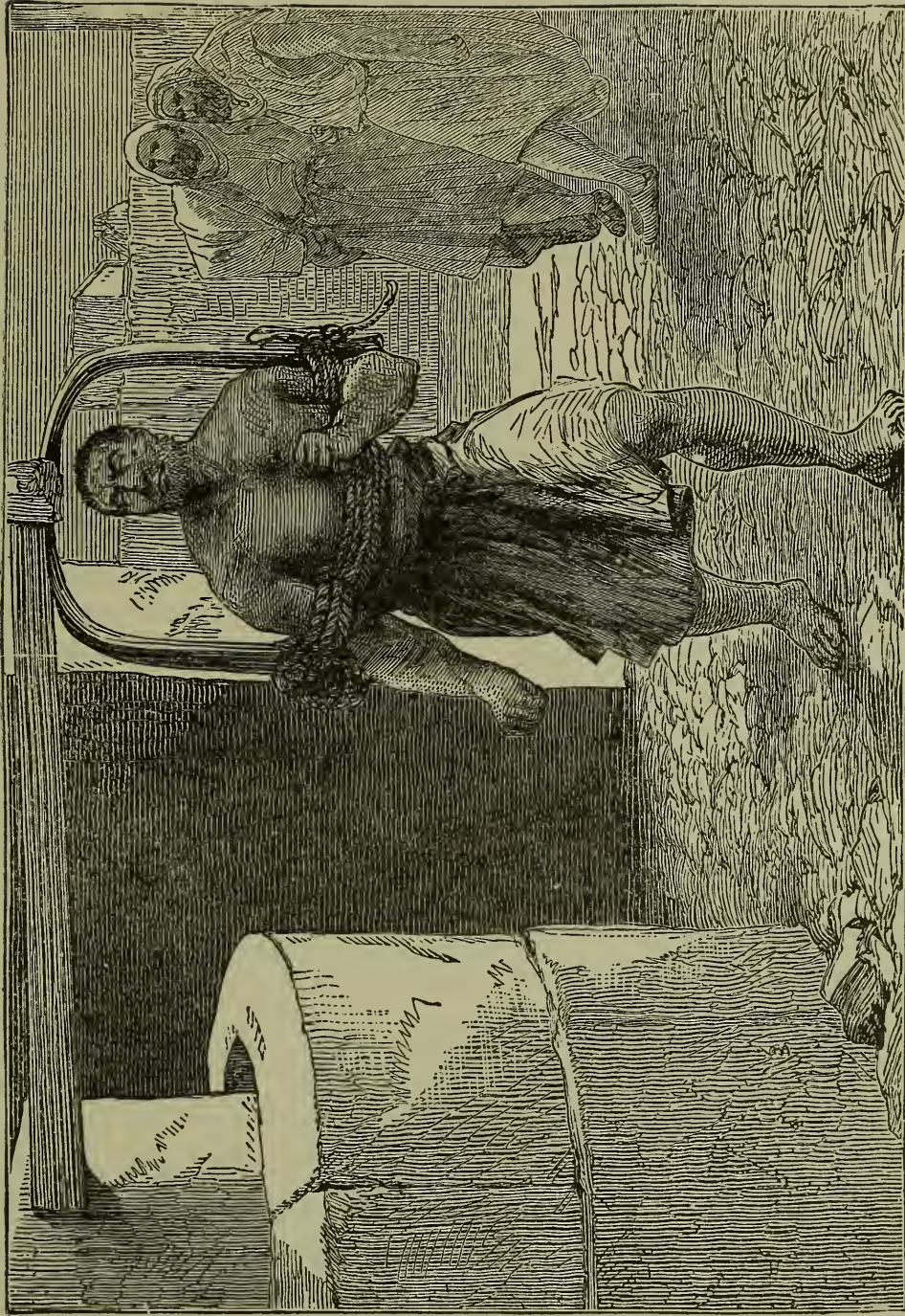
After a while his hair grew long again, and the Lord gave his strength back to him.

One day as they were offering sacrifice to Dagon, they sent for Samson, that he might make sport for them.

They set him between two great pillars that held up the building. "And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

"Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

"And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remem-



BLIND SAMSON.

ber me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

“And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

“And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

“Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father.” Judges 16:26-31.

In Samson, Israel could have read their history if they had tried. Samson’s strength lay in his being a Nazarite, or consecrated to God. His weakness came through not remaining true to his calling. Israel’s strength was in their being the chosen people of God. They became weak when they turned from the Lord and worshiped idols.

His blindness was like the spiritual blindness of Israel.

And as they delivered Samson, their friend, into the hands of the Philistines, just so the Jews delivered Jesus, their Savior, into the hands of the Gentiles. But Samson in his death destroyed more of their enemies than he did in his life. Even so Jesus by his death and resurrection fully broke for us the power of Satan.

Ruth.

DURING the time that Israel was ruled by judges, there was a man of the name of Elimelech. His home was in Bethlehem, but on account of a famine he moved with his family into the land of Moab.

While there Elimelech was taken sick and died. After his death his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, were married to two Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth. In about ten years the sons also died. This



SAMSON MAKING SPORT FOR THE PHILISTINES.

left Elimelech's wife, Naomi, with no one except her two daughters-in-law.

When Naomi heard that the famine was ended at her old home, she decided to return. Orpah and Ruth started with her on her way, and they were sad and wept when she thought it best for them to return to their own country. They had learned to love Naomi. Both were willing to go with her, but she urged them to remain with their people and gods.

So Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back; but Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, . . . for whither thou goest, I will go. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die and there will be buried. And she asked the Lord to punish her if anything should ever cause her to leave Naomi.

When Naomi saw how much Ruth loved her, she did not say any more. So they two went on their journey.

On reaching Bethlehem, Naomi's old friends met her and were surprised to see how changed she was. They said, "Is this Naomi?" She said, "Call me not Naomi, but Mara; for my life is bitter now," meaning her loved ones were dead.

It was the time of year when the grain was ready to be harvested. The custom then was to leave some of the grain for the poor people to gather. And Ruth and Naomi were very poor.

One day Ruth asked if she might go and gather some of this grain. Naomi said, "Go, my daughter." And as it happened, she gleaned that day in the field of a man whose name was Boaz. Now, Boaz was a kinsman of Naomi, and very rich.

When Naomi heard that Ruth had gleaned in his field, she was glad and felt that God was directing them.

Boaz saw the young woman in his field and asked who she was. When he heard that she had left her old home where they worshiped idols, that she might serve the God of Israel, he admired her.

He had his servants drop some grain purposely for her, and at meal-time she was invited to eat. So Ruth gleaned in the field every day while the harvest lasted.

Before the end of the harvest she had proved to all her sweet virtuous life. Boaz had found that he loved her, but one thing stood in the way of their marriage. This was some law concerning Naomi's



NAOMI LEAVING THE LAND OF MOAB.

property or land; but all was soon arranged. They were married, and the people prayed the Lord to bless Ruth.

After a while God gave them a little son, and they named him Obed. Naomi took care of it, and was its nurse.

Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse, the father of King David, from whom Jesus our Savior descended.

Ruth's Mission.

I have often read the Bible,
Read it through in search of truth;
And my eyes have often rested
On the book which we call Ruth.

Ruth became the wife of Boaz,
And her home was blessed indeed,
For a line of kings descended—
David and his sons, we read.



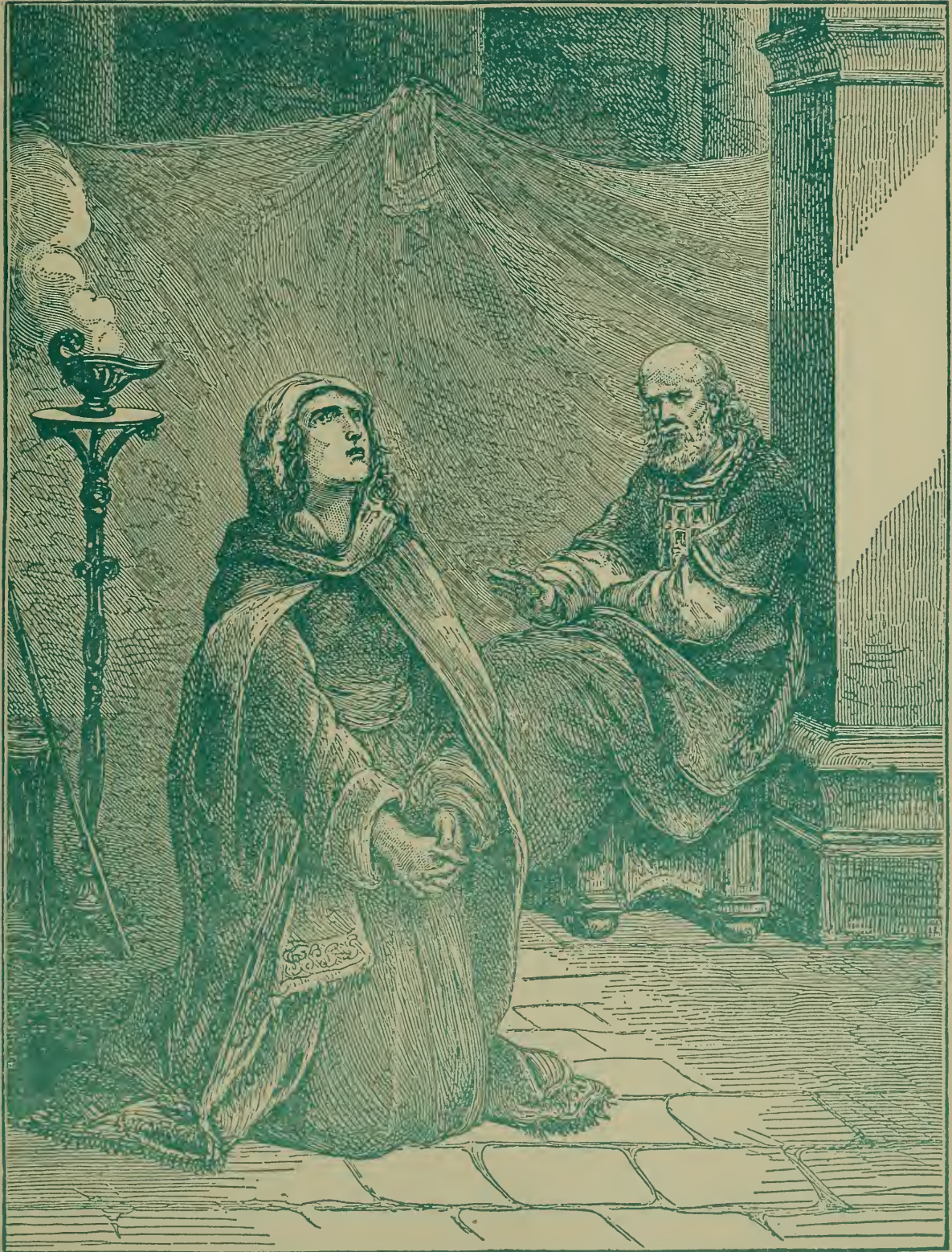
THE GLEANING IN THE FIELD.

There I saw a gentle maiden,
Who had left her friends behind;
And with heart so full of duty,
To earth's pleasures she was blind.

And when many years were ended,
Once again we read of One,
Born within a humble manger,
Bearing record as her son.

But I did not see the beauty,
Or her mission here below,
'Till one day the dear Lord showed me,
And since then I've loved her so.

But the thought that made me love her,
Was so simple, yet so true;
'Twas the faith that made her follow
In a path so strangely new.



HANNAH PRAYING BEFORE THE LORD.

Ruth lived where they worshiped idols—It was not for years she labored,
Never knew the God above; Her reward was soon to come;
But she heard of his great mercy, God gave blessings, and this maiden
That he was a God of love. Soon had wealth and peace and home.

Forth she went and nothing doubted, Now in future as I'm searching
Trusting God for food to eat; God's dear Word to find the truth,
And he blessed her humble efforts I shall try and e'er remember,
As she gleaned among the wheat. How God blessed the maiden Ruth.

Hannah's Prayer.

MANY years after the death of Ruth there was a woman named Hannah. Every year this woman went with her husband to worship the Lord at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was.

Hannah had no children, and this made her sad. Year after year she had prayed for a child, but her prayer had not been answered. At last she promised God that if he would give her a child, she would lend him to the Lord all the days of his life.

This time as she prayed, great tears filled her eyes. Eli the high priest saw how troubled she was. When he knew the cause of her grief, he spoke kindly to her and said, "Go in peace; and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition."

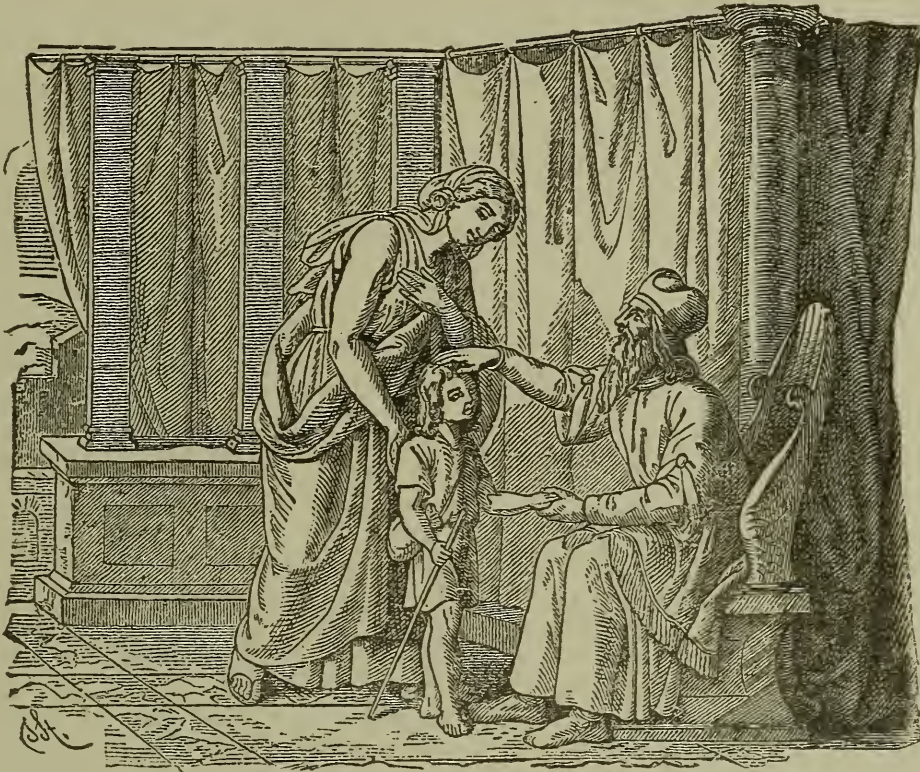
Then Hannah felt that God had heard her prayer. The next day she returned home with her husband.

After a while God gave her a little son. She called him Samuel, which means "asked of God," because she had asked God to give her a son.

The next time her husband went to worship the Lord, Hannah did not go. She said, "I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide forever." Her husband was willing, so she remained at home.

When Samuel was quite young, his mother took him to Shiloh.

She told Eli that she was the woman who had prayed so earnestly to the Lord. For that child she had prayed, and now that God had heard and answered, she was going to lend him to the Lord as long as he lived.



HANNAH BRINGS SAMUEL TO THE LORD'S HOUSE.

Hannah was very happy, and rejoiced greatly in the Lord. She sang a song of praise. Then she returned home with her husband.

Every year she made a little coat for Samuel and brought it to him. God gave Hannah other sons and daughters; but Samuel remained at Shiloh in the Lord's house.

Eli and His Sons.

WE have just had a beautiful picture of faith and trust; but now a new scene comes before us that is sad indeed.

Eli the high priest was a Levite, and was descended from Aaron. Israel had gone deeply into sin. Though they remembered that the priesthood descended from Aaron, yet they forgot that this office was held only by being true to God.

Now, Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who were very wicked. The Bible says they were "sons of Belial," that is, they were worthless, lawless fellows.

God was angry with Eli because he did not punish his sons for doing wrong. He had even allowed them to become priests in the Lord's house.

Here in Eli's care Samuel was placed. How easy it would have been for him to follow in the footsteps of Hophni and Phinehas. But he did not.

God chose Samuel, not only to be a prophet in Israel, but also to show Eli the error he was in.

It was Samuel who heard God's voice calling him in the night. God had to call three times before Eli and Samuel understood that it was the Lord. Then Samuel listened; and when God called him the fourth time, he answered, "Speak; for thy servant heareth."

God spoke words that were terrible to hear. He said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

"In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." 1 Sam. 3:11-14.

Samuel arose early the next morning and began the work that he



SAMUEL HEARS THE VOICE OF GOD.

had to do. But he was afraid to go and tell Eli what God had said to him. When Eli saw this, he called Samuel and encouraged him to tell



SAMUEL TELLS ELI GOD'S MESSAGE.

him all God had said. So Samuel told him everything; and Eli said, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."

"And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." And all Israel knew that Samuel was a prophet of the Lord.



Death of Eli and His Sons.

NOW we come to the saddest part of our picture. The children of Israel went out to fight against the Philistines. In the very beginning of the battle, Israel was driven back, and about four thousand were slain.



DEATH OF ELI.

Then the people said, "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies."

God had departed from Eli and his sons. Yet they even dared go so far as to remove the sacred ark.

God had said to Samuel, "When I begin, I will also make an end," and now the end was near. "When the ark of the covenant came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again."

When the Philistines heard the cause of the shout, they were frightened and said: "God is come into the camp. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of this mighty God that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness? Be strong. O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight.

"And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent. There fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain."

A man who escaped from the army ran back to Shiloh. When the people heard the news, all the city cried out.

Eli was so anxious to hear the news that he was sitting at the gate of the city. His heart trembled for the ark of the Lord.

He heard the sad news of Israel's defeat and that his sons were dead; but when he heard that the ark of God was taken, it was more than he could bear. "He fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy."

The Ark of God in Philistia.

GREAT was the rejoicing of the Philistines over the capture of what seemed to them Israel's strength. But God did not intend their joy to last long.

They had also rejoiced when Samson was shorn, and had supposed that his strength was gone. It is true that Israel's strength had gone. But their strength had really come from God.

Hophni and Phinehas had been allowed to use the vessels of God's house in a very light manner, and this had displeased the Lord.

They supposed their strength must be contained in the ark of his covenant. Now that it was gone, they seemed to have nothing to look to. But as Samson's hair grew, and his strength returned for a short time; so the ark of God returned, but not to be used as in days gone by. Israel was no longer what it had been.

But let us follow the ark and see what became of it.

The ark of God was taken to Ashdod and placed in the house of the Philistines' god. This god, or idol, was called Dagon. It had head and hands like a man, but its body was like a fish.

Early the next morning the Philistines went to the house of their god. There a sight met their eyes that they could not understand. Their idol, Dagon, lay upon its face before the ark of God. They thought, perhaps, this was an accident. So they took Dagon and set him in his place again.

"When they arose early the next morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left."

From that time every one was careful not to step upon the threshold when they entered Dagon's house.

The Lord sent sickness among them, and so many mice that their crops were destroyed.

When the people living in Ashdod saw what trouble they were having, they sent the ark to Gath. There the people were destroyed in the same way.

Next the ark was sent to Ekron. When the Ekronites saw the ark of God, they cried out, saying, "They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people."

The Philistines then decided to send the ark back—but how?

The Ark of God Returns.

THE ark of the Lord was in Philistia about seven months. It had brought trouble and death everywhere it went. So the priests and wise men were called to decide how they could return it to the children of Israel.

They said, "If ye send away the ark of God, send it not empty, but return a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed." Then said the Philistines, "What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return?" They answered, "Five golden emerods, and five golden mice."

These priests told them not to harden their hearts as the Egyptians did, but to make a new cart and tie two cows to it. Both of these cows were to have young calves. After the calves had been shut up and the ark placed upon the cart, they were to let the cows go. They were to follow and see where the cows went. If they went straight to Beth-shemesh in the land of Canaan, they would believe their troubles had been sent from God.

These people must have known all about the way God dealt with the Egyptians. Perhaps they thought some of the plagues brought upon Pharaoh would have happened anyway; so now they meant to prove whether the trouble that had befallen them was by chance or not.

They did just as the priests said; and they watched to see what would happen.

The cows took the straight road and did not turn to the right or the left. Soon they crossed the line where the children of Israel were working in the wheat-field.

Beth-shemesh was one of the cities set apart for the Levites. Here upon a great stone the Levites offered up as a sacrifice the two cows that had brought the ark home, using the cart as wood.

The ark was shortly afterward taken up to Kirjath-jearim, and was there in the house of Abinadab, a Levite, for twenty years.



RETURN OF THE ARK.

Samuel, the Man of God.

IN Samuel we find a man who was a Levite, a Nazarite, a prophet, and a judge. Just the one Israel was needing so much. From a child he had ministered to the Lord before Eli.

Now that Israel was left without a judge, who was more able than Samuel to speak of God to the people?

Twenty years had passed since the return of the ark. The Bible says the time seemed long, for God was not with them as he had been.

At last the people became sad and remembered the blessings they had enjoyed in the past. Then it was Samuel's work to direct them to a happy change.

His message to Israel was, "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods from among you, and prepare your hearts to serve the Lord only. He will then deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." Then they did put away Baalim and Ashtaroath, which were idols, and served the Lord only.

Samuel's next step was to call the people together at Mizpeh to a general confession of sin. This was something Israel had not humbled themselves to do since the time of Moses.

Here they called upon God to forgive them, and to deliver them out of the hand of the Philistines. Samuel took a lamb and offered it for a burnt offering to the Lord and cried unto him for Israel, and the Lord heard him.

How sweetly this lamb that was offered pointed to the Lamb of God, Jesus, who was offered many years after, as a sacrifice for the sins of the people.

Now Israel was in the right way. They were seeking help from the only true source, and it came.

The Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together, and with one accord they went up against them.

At the sight of their enemies, the people of God were very much frightened. They did not want to fight now, but how could they help it?

Then God once more proved to them that he was ready to help them when in trouble. This time it was by sending a terrible thunderstorm. The Philistines were filled with such fear that they ran in every direction and Israel was delivered once more.

Samuel set up a stone and called it Ebenezer, or "the stone of help." It was a monument in memory of their deliverance by God.

The Story of Samuel.

SAMUEL judged Israel all his life. His home was in Ramah; but he went from year to year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, to judge the people.

They loved him and had all confidence in his words. When he came to the different towns, the people were anxious to know what he had to say to them.

But Samuel was growing old, and the work was too hard for him. So he made his two sons, Joel and Abiah, judges in Beer-sheba. Sad to say, they were not like their father.

They were not guilty of the wicked deeds of Eli's sons, but they were tempted to take bribes or presents from the people. This hindered them from giving fair judgment, and therefore the people complained.

The people had long wanted a king that they might be like other nations; so this gave them an excuse to go to Samuel and ask for one. They told him that he was old, and that his sons were not like him. So they wanted him to appoint them a king before he died.

Samuel was very sad over this matter, because he felt that the thing was displeasing to God. He asked God what he should do and the Lord said, "Hearken unto . . . the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me." He was to choose them a king, but to tell them plainly what kind of man the king would be. 1 Sam. 8:11-18.

Samuel told the people all the Lord had said, but they answered, "Give us a king." And God gave them the desire of their heart.

Saul.

ISRAEL'S desire for a king now put an end to the judges. When God said they had rejected him, he meant that an earthly king had been chosen instead of himself.

Until this time their help had come from Heaven; now they were to have an earthly king, and would look to him rather than to God.

God gave them their desire, but did it in anger. Hos. 13:11. Still, he said he would care for them if they would fear him. "But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers: if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."

Now, the one God chose to be their ruler was a tall, handsome young man of the name of Saul.

One day God told Samuel that he was going to send Israel's future king to him. This came to pass in a very strange way.

Saul and his servant had been out hunting for some animals belonging to Saul's father. For three days they had searched, but could not find them, and they were about ready to return home.

Then the servant spoke of Samuel, and said perhaps he could tell them what they wished to know. At first Saul did not want to go, but at last decided he would go.

Samuel told that the animals had been found, but that they should remain over night with him, as he had something to say to Saul.

When Samuel was told that he was to see the future king, he laid away a choice part of the dinner for him. This was now brought forth and set before Saul. The next morning Samuel told him that he was to be Israel's king.

Saul could not believe it at first, but let Samuel anoint him. Before Saul left, Samuel told him he would meet some men at a cer-

tain place on his return home. They would give him two loaves of bread and he would also be told that the animals were found, but that



SAUL ANOINTED BY SAMUEL.

his father feared he was dead. Saul and his servant would also meet a company of prophets, and as they would prophesy the Spirit

of the Lord would come upon Saul and he would also prophesy. Everything came to pass just as Samuel had said, and Saul could not help believing that he was to be king over Israel.

Saul is Made King.

WHEN Saul reached home, his uncle asked where he had been. Saul told him he could not find the animals for which he was looking, so he had gone to see if Samuel could tell him where to go. He said Samuel told him they were found; but Saul did not tell of anything else that had happened.

Not long after this Samuel called the people together again. This time it was to decide who should be their king. He knew whom God had chosen, but he wanted the people to know and choose for themselves.

Saul knew what was about to happen, and he hid himself. When he could not be found, God made it known just where he was hidden.

When Saul came forward and the people saw what a tall, noble-looking man he was, most of them wanted him for their king; however, he was not made king then.

A short time after this the Ammonites came to fight against the men of Jabesh-gilead. This was one of the cities east of Jordan belonging to the half tribe of Manasseh.

The inhabitants did not want to fight. They offered to be servants to the Ammonites if they would make a covenant with them. This the Ammonites would not do, unless they could first put out the right eye of each one. In order to fully understand what that meant, we must remember that a soldier held his shield with his left hand, thus hiding his left eye, and looked at his enemy with his right eye; so he that would put out that eye would make men useless in war.

The men of Jabesh-gilead asked for seven days time to decide what they would do.

When Saul heard of the insult the Ammonites had offered to his people, he was very angry. He sent messengers at once to every part of Canaan and told them they must come and help deliver their brethren from the Ammonites.

About three hundred and thirty thousand men came to join in the battle, and they drove their enemies until there were not two of them left together. Then the people praised Saul and made him their king.

It displeased the Lord to have his people so anxious for a king. For God had been their king, and now they were taking Saul instead of God. Samuel talked very plainly to them and said, "Now behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired. If ye will fear God and obey his voice, then shall both ye and your king be blessed; but if not, the hand of the Lord shall be against you."

Saul and His Son Jonathan.

SAUL was just what Israel could wish for in a king. He was brave, strong, and handsome, and God was with him. But there came a time when Saul was not humble, and God's Spirit left him.

When Saul had been king about two years, he called all the people out to battle against the Philistines.

The people did not have many weapons to fight with. In those days they used the bow and arrow instead of guns. Their swords and spears had all been destroyed by the Philistines, who had removed every blacksmith out of the land. Only Saul and his son had sword and spear; and the men had not been trained for battle.

But Saul chose two thousand of the bravest men for himself and one thousand for his son Jonathan. With these they went to battle.

Jonathan took his men and fought against some of the Philistines. This made the rest of the Philistines angry, and the whole army came rushing upon Israel.

They were not prepared for this; and although they called every one out to do his duty, they were driven back. All had to hide; some in holes, some in caves, and anywhere they could.

Sometime after this Jonathan did something that surprised all. Without telling any one, not even his father, he started out, with only his armor-bearer, toward the camp of the enemy.

They climbed up the rocks on their hands and feet to where the Philistines were. Before going Jonathan said, "It may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or few. And his armor-bearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.

"Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

"If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them. But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us." 1 Sam. 14:8-10.

When the Philistines saw them, they said, "Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of their holes where they had hid themselves. Come up to us, and we will show you a thing."

Then Jonathan said to the armor-bearer, "Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hands of Israel. And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armor-bearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armor-bearer slew after him.

"And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.

"And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling." 1 Sam. 14:12-15.

When Saul's watchmen saw the confusion among the Philistines,

they wondered what it meant. Saul numbered his people to see who was missing, and found it was Jonathan and his armor-bearer.

Then all the people hurried from their places of hiding and went to help them. When they arrived among the Philistines, they found them slaying each other in their excitement. So the Lord saved Israel that day, and the battle passed over.

Saul is Rejected.

THE morning before the battle just spoken of, Saul had said the people must not eat any food until the battle ended.

Jonathan, not knowing of his father's command, came to a place where there was some honey, and he ate of it. The people then told him what his father had said, and Jonathan felt that his father had done wrong. He said the people could have done much more for the Lord if they had eaten food.

That night the people were so hungry that they could not wait to have their food prepared as their law commanded. They killed and ate it at once with the blood. Saul knew this was wrong; but instead of taking the blame upon himself, he thought it must lie among the people. He blamed them because God did not answer his prayer when he asked whether he should fight any more that night.

When he was told that his son had eaten honey that day, he wanted to put him to death; but the people would not let him.

Poor Saul! he did not seem to realize that it was only by a careful walk before God that he was to keep his strength and influence. When God chose him for king, he was little in his own sight; but prosperity and praise seemed to puff him up. God had said that if they would fear and obey his voice, then their kingdom would stand; but if not, they would be punished.

At one time the Lord sent Samuel to tell Saul that he must go and destroy all the Amalekites. He said not to leave any person or animal alive among them. Saul went, but he did not obey all of God's

command. He took Agag, the king of the Amalekites, alive; but destroyed all the rest of the people. He also saved the best of the sheep, oxen, fatlings, lambs, and all that was good, and so did not utterly destroy them; but everything that was vile and refuse they destroyed.

“Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night.

“And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

“And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

“And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

“And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

“Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

“And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?” 1 Sam. 15:10-19.

Then Saul tried to excuse himself, and said that he had obeyed the voice of the Lord; that he had utterly destroyed the Amalekites and had taken Agag; and that it was the people who had taken the spoil, which should have been destroyed. But he said they had taken it to sacrifice unto the Lord.

And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in the obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king over Israel."

"And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." 1 Sam. 15: 27, 28.

Saul was very sorry then, and said he had sinned, and begged Samuel to turn and worship the Lord with him once more. This Samuel did, and then said to bring Agag to him. When Agag came, he said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past"; but Samuel answered, "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women." And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces.

Saul and Samuel never met again after this. Saul had become unfit for the kingdom, as Esau was for the inheritance of the first-born. And as Esau's inheritance was given to his brother Jacob, so now the kingdom was to be given to another.

The Lord said to Samuel, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." But Samuel mourned for him until God said he must not mourn any more, but must go and anoint some one else as king.

At first Samuel was afraid to go, but God said he must. And he was sent to a man of the name of Jesse. One of Jesse's sons was chosen, and Samuel anointed him as king instead of Saul.



King Saul.

Once more a story I will tell,
And trust you'll bear with me.
It may not all the brightness share
That you would like to see;
It even may make tender hearts
Feel very sad indeed,
To see how Satan captures souls
When they his words will heed.

My story is about a man
Of very humble birth,
But stately, tall, and handsome, too,
As found in all the earth.
This man was chosen as a king
To sit upon a throne:
The thought was humbling, for he felt
So little, and alone.

This man was none but Saul of old,
Whom Israel made their king.
The man was good, but it grieved God
To have them do this thing;
For when they took an earthly king,
It shut the dear Lord out.
God wanted them to come to him
With ev'ry care and doubt.

When Israel entered Canaan's land,
'Twas God who led them there;
And when his priests and prophets true
Made known their wants through prayer,
Then God would help them ev'ry time,
When in this way they came.
He was their king, whom they refused,
All to their grief and shame.

It made the prophet Samuel sad
To listen to their plea;

And earnestly he asked the Lord
How this could ever be.
Then God said, "Hearken to their voice;
But tell them how this thing
Will make them slaves unto the one
Whom they choose as their king."

In Saul they found all they desired;
And they could then appear
As other nations round about:
They did not feel so queer.
You know it is quite hard sometimes
To hear some person say
Bad things about us, and to point
Us out in sneering way.

We may not understand at first,
Get hurt at what they say;
But God will help us bear these things,
If we will go and pray.
But if we try to imitate,
And thus avoid the sneer,
We may escape, but, ah! our trust
In God will disappear.

When Saul no longer in his heart
That warning voice could hear;
When he no longer felt that God
In time of need was near,
We find him standing in array
Before a giant foe;
But Saul's great courage fails him now,
Another man must go.

And thus it was a young lad heard
About this great affair,
And said that he would dare to meet
This bold Philistine there.
What wonder now filled ev'ry heart,
To think that just a boy

Would think of marching out that day,
This giant to destroy.

Some thought 'twas pride that urged him on,
And some that fame he sought,
And said, "His courage, though so great,
Will soon all come to naught";
But David bravely told them all
From whence his strength would come,



DAVID SLAYS A LION.

And how God helped him slay a bear
And lion when at home.

Then Saul said, "Go," and bade him wear
An armor strong and great;



DAVID GATHERING PEBBLES FROM THE BROOK.

BEAUTIFUL STORIES

But David found he could not bear
The armor's heavy weight.
So going to the water's edge,
Five stones he quickly sought
And placed them in his shepherd's bag,
Which with his sling he'd brought.

And then with only staff in hand,
They see brave David stand;
How he will kill this giant foe
They can not understand.
The giant's heart was full of rage
As he saw David there,
And said that David's flesh would soon
Be left for beasts to share.

But David answered, "Nay, but thou
This same death soon will see;
For God hath sent me forth to smite
And take thy head from thee.
This battle is the Lord's to-day,
As all must quickly own."
And David, hasting forth, soon slew
Goliath with a stone.

When Saul saw that his foe was dead,
By some one else was slain,
And that it had no honor brought
To him was very plain,
A hatred in his heart arose;
Saul let it have full sway
Against the one who'd vict'ry won
For Israel there that day.

He heard the people praising, too,
Brave David on the street,
And in his heart the words they said
Were anything but sweet.
'Twas from that time Saul sought a way
This brave young boy to kill;

But through God's all-wise providence
These plans could not fulfil.

You see, when God had left poor Saul,
An evil spirit came,
And, making its abode with him,
Led on in sin and shame.
He saw in David what he'd lost,
For once he loved God, too;
Ah! would God take the kingdom next,
And give to one more true?

Poor David's heart was very sad,
He lived in constant fear
That Saul, when in a jealous rage,
Would smite him with his spear.
He had to seek a home in caves,
Or in the hills, or wood;
But David never in his heart
Wished aught for Saul but good.

While Saul was seeking David's life
In ev'ry way he knew,
He quite forgot his enemies
Until they came in view.
The van of the Philistine hosts
Came looming now in sight;
Then David Saul was forced to leave,
And for his country fight.

Poor Saul! how much he needed help!
But where now could he go?
The Lord a deaf ear turned to him,
No visions would he show,
And Samuel dead, and David—ah!
Just then a thought appeared—
He'd seek a woman who could tell
Him of the things he feared.

The witch of Endor was the one
Saul sought with greatest care,
And asked that Samuel might appear
To talk with him while there.
He told the wizard not to fear
That she would be destroyed,
But did not tell that he was Saul,
When he her help employed.

But when she saw the spirit rise,
The woman cried with fear;
For she could then see Saul's deceit,
And thought that death was near.
But Saul said, "No; be not afraid,
Thy life I do not seek;
But tell, didst thou see Samuel?
For I would with him speak."

When she told Saul all that she saw,
He stooped, and bowed his face;
No doubt, once more his conscience spoke,
And he felt his disgrace.
Saul then told Samuel all his woe,
And said, "I'm sore distressed;
My enemies make war with me,
And I'm in no way blessed.

"God does not answer when I pray,
By dream or prophet true,
And that is why I've called on thee;
So tell me what to do."
And Samuel said, "Why then ask me,
If thy prayers are in vain?
To-morrow thou and all thy sons
Shall number with the slain.

"The kingdom which thou lovest well
Thy God hath rent from thee;
Another man upon thy throne
From this time shall there be."

Ah! when Saul heard his awful doom,
'Twas more than he could bear;
He straightway fell upon the floor,
And laid in silence there.

At last this God-forsaken king,
With heart so full of woe,
Went out into the darkness there,
And next day met his foe.
And when Saul on that dreadful day
Knew that he soon must die,
He fell upon his own sword there,
When he saw death was nigh.

Well, Israel, I truly think,
When all this trouble came,
Must then have longed for their first king—
Jehovah was his name.
They must have seen their error, too,
In asking for a king;
But God brought all this out for good,
As he does ev'rything.

It was not long ere David ruled,
And he was good and true;
Through all his reign he sought to keep
The Lord's will e'er in view.
God sent at last his Son to reign
And rule in all the land;
And he reigns still upon a throne,
His kingdom e'er shall stand.

David Chosen Instead of Saul.

NOW, Jesse was a grandson of Ruth the Moabitess. He had eight sons. When Samuel went to Bethlehem, he sent for this man and his sons to come to the sacrifice he was making to the Lord. God told

Samuel that in looking for a king to succeed Saul he must be careful, not to look at the outward appearance of the man, his height or his countenance. God wanted a king whose heart was right.

One by one the tall, handsome sons of Jesse passed before Samuel. Each time Samuel said, "No; this is not the one whom God has chosen."

When the seventh son had passed, Samuel asked Jesse if these were all the sons he had. Jesse answered that there was one more, a boy, who was keeping sheep. And Samuel said, "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down until he comes."

Then his father sent for him and brought him before Samuel. As soon as Samuel saw him, the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David, for that was his name.

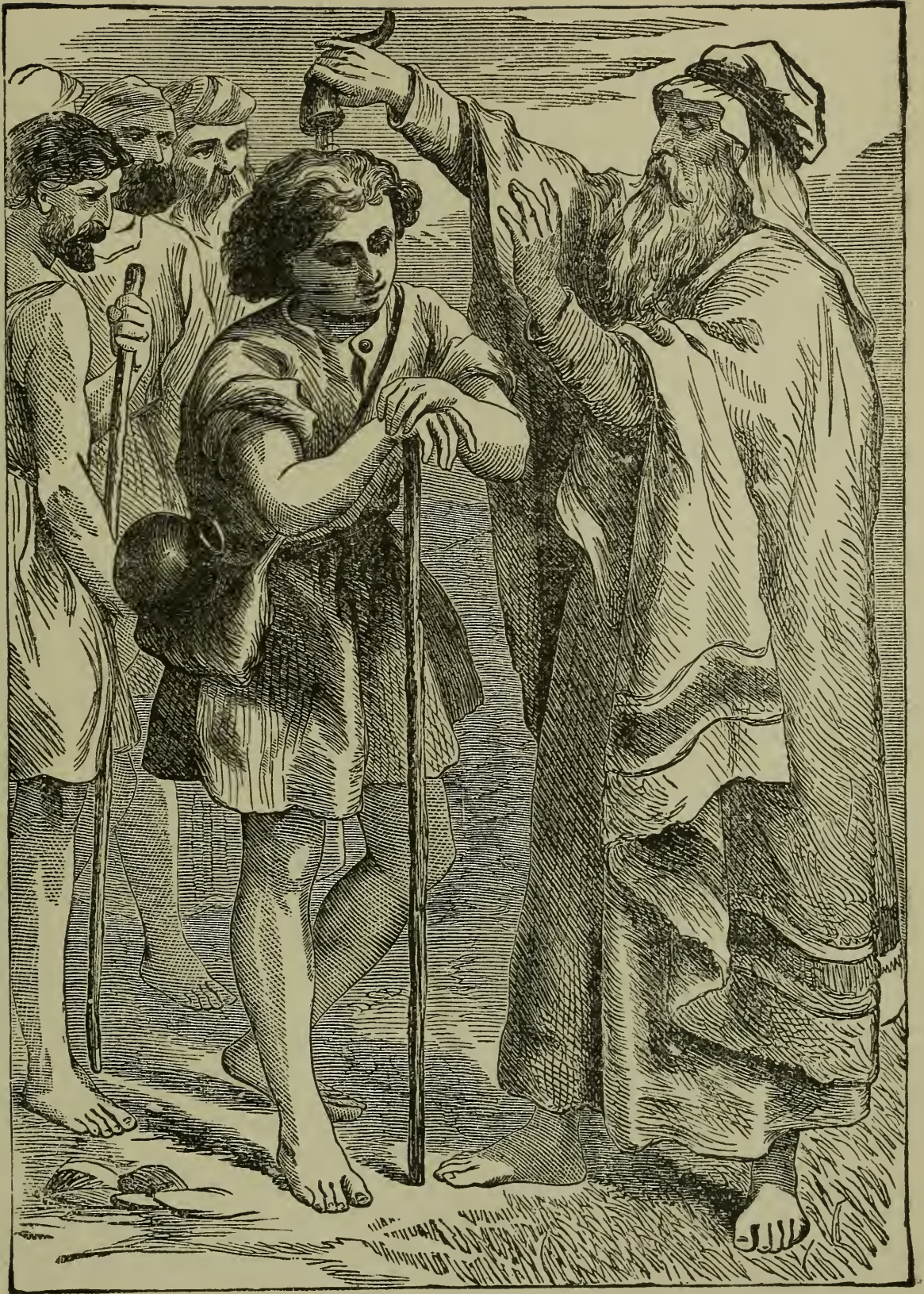
But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit troubled him. When Saul's servants saw that the evil spirit came upon their king, they told him to look for some one who could play well upon a harp, and perhaps the music would drive the evil spirit from him. So Saul said, "Look now out for me a skilful player, and bring him to me."

One of his servants said he had seen such a man, a son of Jesse. It was David whom he meant. Now, David could play well upon the harp; so Saul said to send for him.

When David came and played such beautiful music, Saul loved him greatly; and David became Saul's armor-bearer. "And Saul sent to Jesse saying, Let David, I pray thee stand before me; for he hath found favor in my sight." And so David stayed with Saul.

When the evil spirit came upon Saul, David would play, and the evil spirit would leave at once.

The Bible does not say that at this time David knew he was ever to be king over Israel. But he knew from what Samuel had done to him that God had called him for some special work.



THE ANOINTING OF DAVID FOR KING.

David Kills a Giant.

ONCE more the army of the Philistines were gathered together to fight against the children of Israel. The two armies faced each other, having a valley between them.

And there went out a champion from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, whose height was about nine and one-half feet. This giant was dressed in an armor that nothing could pierce. Only one place was unprotected, and that was the forehead and eyes.

He stood and cried to the armies of Israel and said, "Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man to fight with me, and to kill me; then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us."

When Saul and all Israel heard these words, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

In our last chapter David was spoken of. While he was not with Saul, he spent his time at home caring for his father's sheep.

When the war began, David's three eldest brothers went with Saul to the battle. One day David's father sent him to see his brothers and to carry them something to eat.

As he came near the place where his brothers were, he heard Goliath asking the people to send some one out to fight with him. David asked what he meant; and when he understood, he said he would go, for he knew the Lord was able to deliver him into their hands.

David's eldest brother was angry with him for talking this way, and accused him of coming down on purpose to see how the battle was going. David said this was not true. But he sent word to Saul that he would go and fight with the giant.

Then Saul sent for David and said, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

But David answered, "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.



DAVID PLAYING ON HIS HARP BEFORE SAUL.

The Lord that delivered me out of the paws of the lion and the bear will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

Saul then said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with thee."

Saul put his armor upon David, but David had not proved them, and so took them off. "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

"And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

"This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

"And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

"And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David." 1 Sam. 17:40, 42, 44-50.



DAVID SLAYS THE GIANT.

When the Philistines saw that Goliath was dead, they ran from the children of Israel, but many were killed and wounded.

Saul asked who David was; and when he found that it was the same boy who had played the harp for him, he was surprised.

David Finds a Friend and an Enemy.

SAUL took David home with him that day and would not let him go to his father's house any more. Here he became acquainted with Jonathan, Saul's son. They soon became great friends, and Jonathan loved David so much that he put his own robe upon him and gave him his sword and bow.

For a while all went well, and David went wherever Saul told him to go. He was loved by all, and Saul made him captain of the men of war.

But something happened that made Saul David's greatest enemy. As Saul was returning from battle one day, he heard the people singing, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." He was very angry when he heard this, and said, "What can he have more but the kingdom?"

From that day Saul sought to put David to death, but God protected David from harm.

One time as David was playing on the harp before Saul, an evil spirit came upon Saul, and he threw a javelin, or spear, saying, "I will smite David even to the wall with it." But David stepped to one side and avoided it twice.

Saul was afraid, because he saw the Lord was with David and was departed from himself. For this reason he placed David in the hottest part of the battle. Here Saul hoped David would be slain, and it would not appear that he had done it.

But God worked out this also to his glory. When the people saw that the Lord was with David, they loved him all the more; but Saul's hatred increased.

At last it was not safe for David to stay with Saul, and he had to escape in the night. His wife, Michal, for he had been married to one of Saul's daughters, let him down through a window. She then took an image and placed it in his bed, and told the soldiers whom Saul had sent for David, that he was sick and could not go.

The men were at once sent back to bring David upon his bed, that Saul might slay him. But when the messengers came, they discovered that an image was in the bed and David was not there.

David's Friend.

POOR David! With a sad heart he went to his friend Jonathan. In his grief he cried out, "What have I done? what is my sin before thy father, that he seeks my life?"

Jonathan told David that he did not believe his father meant to kill him, for he was sure his father would have told him if he had intended to do so. David answered that Saul knew they were friends and he would hide anything like that from him, but he was sure Saul meant to have him put to death.

Then Jonathan promised he would do anything in his power for David. They went out into a field and had a long talk. Jonathan must have felt that God would some day make David king over Israel instead of his father or himself; but not the slightest feeling of jealousy entered his heart. He had nothing but the deepest love for his friend.

Here alone in the field they promised that they would always do all they could to protect one another. And Jonathan made David promise that when his trouble was ended he would always show kindness to him and his children; and David promised.

What deep faith in God, and full trust in David, Jonathan showed in this request.

Jonathan then said that he would go to his father and see if he really sought David's life, and that when he found out, he would return with a little boy.

Near a large rock, where David was to hide, he would shoot three arrows. If Saul meant to do David no harm, he would say to the lad, "Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them." Then David was to know that there would be peace to him, and no hurt. But if he said to the boy, "Behold, the arrows are beyond thee," then David was to go his way and know that the Lord had sent him away. So David hid himself.

Jonathan soon found that his father intended to kill David. When Jonathan tried to take David's part, Saul threw his javelin at him.

In the morning Jonathan took the lad and did as he had promised David he would do. "And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee?"

"And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

"And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city.

"And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

"And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city." 1 Sam. 20:36-42.

Thus the two noblest men in Israel parted, only to meet once afterward, and that in very sad and different circumstances.



THE TWO FRIENDS.

David's Enemy.

NOW David was cast upon the hard cruel world, with no one to confide in except God. Not even the friendship of Jonathan could help him now.



DAVID AND SAUL IN THE CAVE.

He must seek shelter somewhere—but where could he go? Outside the land of Israel with Saul's enemies would be best. But the way was long and full of dangers.

So we find David seeking help and advice from the true source. It was God who helped him to kill the lion and save his father's flock; and it was God who enabled him to kill the giant and save Israel.

His trust was still in God, and to him and to his house he went for help. Ahimelech the high priest was there, and was surprised to see David.

But David had no time to spare, and he told Ahimelech that his business required haste. He asked for five loaves of bread. Being told there was nothing but the shewbread, he took that, and also the sword of Goliath.

David noticed that one of Saul's servants, named Doeg, was there, and David felt afraid that this person would do him harm; but it could not be helped.

He then went to Gath, the very town in which Goliath had lived. It seems strange that he should do this. Still, he may have thought that these Philistines would be glad to have him, since they hated Saul. If this was his thought, it did not turn out as he expected.

"And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?"

"And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. And he changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

"Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?" 1 Sam. 21:11-15.

Then David left this place and went to live in a cave. When his father and mother heard where he was, they went down and lived with him. About this time David wrote the thirty-fourth, fifty-sixth, and fifty-seventh Psalms. Not only his parents went to live with him, but also "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men."

David's parents were old, and he felt that this cave was not a suitable place for them to live. So he asked this of the king of Moab: "Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me."

Doeg the Edomite.

NOW that David's parents were safely removed, he went into the land of Judah. Here he hid in the forest with his men.

It was not long until Saul heard of David's hiding-place. "Now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him." Among these servants was Doeg, the same man that David had seen in the tabernacle when he went to enquire of the priest.

Saul asked why no one tried to help him or tell him anything about David. No one answered at first; but soon Doeg said he had seen David in the priest's house, and that the priest enquired of the Lord for David, gave him victuals, and handed him the sword of Goliath.

This was enough for Saul, whose mind and conscience were so corrupt. Saul could never expect anything from the ministers of God; for had they not said he was rejected and the kingdom given to another? It was not hard for him to believe that the priests had made a plot against him. In this way Doeg worked mischief.

Then Saul had all the priests called. They tried to explain that they did not know David was fleeing from him, but Saul would not listen. He commanded all of the priests to be put to death.

No one would touch the priests of the Lord. Then the king turned to Doeg and told him to fall upon them. Now Doeg was not one of the children of Israel, for he was descended from Esau. He must have been a very wicked person, for at Saul's command he slew that day eighty-five priests. And he slew every man, woman, and child in Nob, the city where the priests lived; also every animal was slain.

One of Ahimelech's sons escaped and went to David. His name was Abiathar. He told David all that had happened. And David said, "I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard."

Last Meeting of David and Jonathan.

WHILE David was hiding from Saul, news came to him that the people living in the city of Keilah were suffering on account of the Philistines. He asked of God through Abiathar the priest whether he should go and help them. God said to go; so David went and saved them from their enemies.

Saul heard that David was in this city, and at once gathered an army to go and try to kill him. But David escaped from there and lived in the woods.

It was in these woods that Jonathan came to his friend and strengthened him in the Lord. Jonathan said to David, "Fear not: the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also my father knoweth." What courage and faith Jonathan showed by this act!

This was the last time they ever met, but David in after years did not forget his promises to his friend.

David now fled from one place to another until escape seemed impossible. Saul and his soldiers were almost ready to take him. How David cried unto the Lord for help we learn from the fifty-fourth Psalm. Just at the last moment God delivered him.

When it seemed that David and his men would certainly be killed, news came to Saul that there was trouble with the Philistines. A messenger came and said, "Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul turned from pursuing after David, and went after the Philistines."

The way God delivered David shows how easy it is for God to help his people when they are in trouble. David said, "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is with me. In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what man can do unto me."

Saul in David's Power.

SAD though it may seem, to follow the story of Saul, yet it will always be a warning to us. God was departed from Saul and Satan was having full power over his life and actions. He was to be pitied as well as feared. David did not wish Saul any harm. It was jealousy that caused Saul to act as he did.

At one time when David and his men were hiding in a cave, Saul came into the same cave. This was a very trying moment for David's men. There Saul was right in their power, but David would not let them touch him.

David cut off a piece of Saul's robe. This was all he did, but his conscience troubled him for doing even that. He said, "The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed."

When Saul arose and passed out of the cave, David followed and called after him. What surprise must have filled Saul's heart as he turned and saw David, whom he was seeking to murder! David asked him why he listened to what men said, for he did not intend to hurt Saul.

When David showed Saul the piece of his robe, and Saul saw what danger he had just escaped, he was sorry for the way he had been acting. But David knew only too well that he would not be sorry long. So he hurried to change his hiding-place. As he expected, Saul, with murder in his heart, was soon following him.

One night Saul and his army were gathered near where David and his men were hiding. All was quiet and every one asleep. Then

David and his nephew went carefully down into the very midst of Saul's army. God must have made the soldiers sleep very soundly, for no one heard David and his nephew.

No thought of hatred was in the heart of David as he went carefully up to Saul. He only wanted to show him again that he did not wish to do him harm.

At Saul's head was his spear, stuck into the ground, and by his side stood a cruse of water. David's nephew begged leave to kill Saul, and said it would not be the same as though David had killed him; but David would not listen. He simply took the spear and cruse of water and went away.

No one knew they had been there. They went away as quietly as they had come. When they were a long way off, David called to Abner, the captain of Saul's men, and then told him what he had done and how easily he could have slain the king had he wished to.

Again Saul was ashamed and saw that he had done wrong. He told David to return, and promised to do him no harm. But David did not trust him and hurried to hide himself. This time he went to live among the Philistines.

Saul's Death.

AGAIN we find Israel gathering for battle against the Philistines. How different is the scene from that of Gideon and his army! Saul, the God-forsaken king, is hurrying on to judgment and ruin.

Gideon, at God's command, reduced his army to three hundred men. Then as he crept down among the enemy, heard them tell of their own destruction. But Saul—ah, where could he look for help? Samuel was dead; his heart was so wicked that he could not expect help from God; and there was no David to meet a Goliath.

Saul was so anxious to know what his fate was to be that he went to a witch, a woman who had a familiar spirit, to find out.

Before this he had ordered all such persons killed, which was

according to God's commandment; now he wanted so much to know what would happen in this battle, that he went to one of these people.

This woman was called the witch of Endor. Saul dressed himself so that she would not know who he was, and then asked her to call up Samuel. 1 Sam. 28:7-25.

Samuel, before his death, had told Saul that the kingdom was taken from him and given to another. Saul knew all this, but he wanted to know how this battle was to end and if he should be killed.

When the woman called up the spirit, which seems to have been a spirit pretending to be Samuel, Saul was informed by the spirit that the next day he and his sons should die. Saul fainted when he heard this, and all his strength left him. When his strength returned, he sadly went forth to meet his death.

The battle was fierce and long. When Saul saw that he must die, he asked his armor-bearer to kill him. When he refused, Saul fell upon his own sword. Saul's three sons also were killed that day; and when Israel saw that they were dead, they fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in their towns. The bodies of Saul and his three sons were shamefully mistreated and then hung upon a wall.

When the men of Jabesh-gilead heard what had been done to the bodies of Saul and his sons, they went one night and took the bodies down and burned them and then buried the bones under a tree. Then they fasted seven days. In this way they showed that they were grateful for what Saul had done for them in the past. 1 Sam. 11:1-15.

David was the only true mourner for Saul, the one who had so bitterly persecuted him. In this David was an example of Christ, who alone wept over Jerusalem, which was getting ready to betray and crucify him.

Many beautiful psalms were written by David—most of them while being driven from place to place by Saul. By carefully reading them you can see just how he felt.

King David.

ABOUT seven years after the death of Saul, David was made king over Israel and went to live at Jerusalem. When he became king, he did not forget his promise to Jonathan, that he would be kind to his children. Jonathan had one son, who was lame; and David had him come to live with him. He ate at the same table with David, and thus David by his kindness fulfilled his promise. 2 Sam. 9:3-13.

David became a very great man, for God was with him and blessed him. He had a great many enemies to fight, for the surrounding nations were very warlike. But God helped David in all these battles, and he continued to grow in favor with God and man.

About seventy years had passed since the ark of God had stood in the tabernacle. God's worship had been greatly neglected. Much had taken place in those years. But now David felt a real longing to see God worshiped in the way the Lord had intended. And so it was planned that the ark should be brought up to Jerusalem.

Poor Israel! They had departed so far from the path of God that they had forgotten how God had commanded them to handle the ark; but David chose the way that the Philistines had chosen when they sent it back from their land.

It was all right for the Philistines to return it in that way, because there were no priests to handle it there; but now the ark was in the land in which God intended it to be, and should have been handled as God had told Moses in the wilderness.

"And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

"And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

"And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

“And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me? So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

“And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.” 2 Sam. 6:3, 5-7, 9-11.

When David heard that God had blessed the man with whom the ark was, he went at once and brought it up to Jerusalem. This time he did it in God’s own way, and the ark was placed safely in the tabernacle.

David was not satisfied, however; because he saw that his own house was made better and more beautiful than the Lord’s, and he wanted it otherwise. The Lord was pleased with David for feeling thus, but said David was not the one to build the Lord’s house. Yet some day there must be a house built, and God would give David a son who should build it.

David had two sons named Solomon and Absalom. Solomon was the one whom God chose to build the temple of the Lord.

Close of David’s Reign.

GOD loved David very much and blessed his service as a king. But David did some things that were wrong. For these sins he was very sorry and earnestly asked God’s forgiveness. God forgave him, but he had to suffer some things on account of his sins.

His two sons Absalom and Solomon were very handsome men, and either seemed suitable to fill his father’s place upon the throne. But God told David that Solomon was the one chosen.

Jealousy and hatred filled Absalom’s heart, and he planned to become king even before his father’s death, if possible. He began first by winning the love and confidence of the people and telling them things that were untrue about his father. “So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”

At last David was forced to leave Jerusalem and hide for fear his son would kill him. Then David's heart was sad, and he went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up. He had his head covered and went barefoot; and all the people that were with him wept.



DAVID CURSED BY SHIMEI.

As he was passing along, and feeling so sad, a man named Shimei, of the house of Saul, came out and cursed and cast stones and dirt at him. What he said was very insulting, but David would not let his men touch Shimei. David said this was nothing compared with the sorrow he felt in regard to his son Absalom.

David had not left Jerusalem any too soon, for Absalom and his men soon came to take possession of the city.

Ahithophel, who had been a very dear friend to David, now turned from him in this his hour of need. He at once gave his friendship to Absalom and tried to help him against David.

An old man whose name was Hushai remained behind. Hushai had also been a friend and adviser to David. He wanted to go with David, but it was thought by his remaining he might be able to overthrow any mischief Ahithophel might do. This proved to be the case; for Ahithophel, knowing so much about David, could easily plan a way to capture him.

Absalom was about to act upon the advice of Ahithophel, but he happened to think of Hushai, and as he was older, thought his advice might be better.

It was very easy for Hushai to think of many reasons why Ahithophel's advice was not good, and then to point out a plan that would be in David's favor. Then Hushai sent two messengers to warn David of his danger.

Absalom and His Sad Death.

WHEN Ahithophel saw that his advice was not taken, he seemed to know how things would go. He went at once to his home and hanged himself.

Those who prove untrue and forsake their friends, generally have a bad end. Judas, one of the apostles of the holy, loving Jesus, allowed Satan to come into his heart. He did this by allowing his love for money to lead him to be a traitor, and, for a few dollars, to betray Jesus to his enemies. He too went and hanged himself afterward.

The messengers whom Hushai sent, were in great danger; but a woman hid them in a well, and they were not seen. They reached David in safety and warned him of his danger.

He had time to safely cross the river Jordan with his men. Then they hid within a wood where there were many dangerous holes and thickets.

With Absalom things did not go well. Many of his men were destroyed in the holes and thickets, and more were killed in this way than with the sword.

“And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.” 2 Sam. 18:9.

And Absalom was killed. They “cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.”

How different this burial was to the one Absalom had wished to have! “In his lifetime he had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king’s dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom’s place.”

David’s men had not allowed him to go into the battle, but he stood in the gate of the city to hear the first news if possible. Here he was when messengers came and told of Absalom’s death.

“And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!” 2 Sam. 18:33.

There was not much rejoicing over the victory of the battle; for the people saw how their king was grieved.

Now that Absalom was dead, his followers remembered how much David had done for them; how they had been delivered out of the hand of their enemies so many times; and now he had fled from the land on account of Absalom.

And since Absalom, whom they had anointed king over them, was dead, the people went and brought David back; and he was once more their king.

Shimei, the man who had cursed David when he thought Absalom was to be king, now came forward and begged to be forgiven.

David sang a beautiful song of thanksgiving to the Lord. It is found in the twenty-second chapter of 2 Samuel.

David's Death.

DAVID'S work upon earth was nearly ended. He had longed to see the Lord's house built while he was still living, but God had chosen another to do it.

Before his death he made every plan possible for the building of it. And he prepared gold, silver, and brass in abundance. Timber and stone had also been made ready, and he told his son Solomon to add to all this.

He called Solomon to him and said: "My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God. But the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight."

"Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness in his days.

"He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.

"Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee.

"Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel: that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God.

"Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed."
1 Chron. 22: 9-13.

And David told Solomon that there were plenty of men who could do the work. Solomon was quite young, but God fitted him for the work.

Now the time of David's death drew near. He was the sweet psalmist of Israel. His last words were of perfect faith and gratitude to God for his tender mercies and love. He died in peace after having reigned over Israel for forty years. David's end was so different from the last of Saul's life. Saul's friends were very few, because he was so selfish and proud. Even God had to leave him. But David's friends were many.

At one time, when David was at war with the Philistines, he said he should be so glad to have a drink from the old well in Bethlehem. Bethlehem was his old home and had been taken by the Philistines.

David did not speak of the drink because he thought some one would bring it; but three brave men went and brought the water from the well.

When David saw how much his men loved him and had risked their lives, he could not drink the water. He poured it out unto the Lord and said, "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?"

Solomon was made king before his father's death, and in all Israel there was none so wise as he was.

The Wisdom of Solomon.

SOLOMON had given his heart to God while he was very young. He had been carefully raised by Nathan the prophet and tried to do what was right.

One night God spoke to him in a dream and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon did not ask for wealth or for anything that was selfish. He simply asked that he might have an understanding heart to judge the people and to help him know the difference between good and bad.

It pleased God when Solomon asked for a wise heart. God said, "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

"And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

"And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

"And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants." 1 Kings 3:11-15.

One time two women came to Solomon. Both lived in the same house, and each had a young child of nearly the same age. One night one of the babies died, and its mother arose and placed it in bed with the other woman and took the living child for her own.

In the morning each mother claimed the living child; and as no one was there to decide, they went to Solomon.

When each of the women had told the same story, that the living child was her own, Solomon, in a strange way, found out who was telling the truth. He commanded his servant to bring him a sword, and then said to cut the living child in two and give half of the child to each woman.

When the true mother heard these words she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it."

Then the king said, "The living child belongs to the woman who does not want it killed." He had not sent for the sword to kill the

child, but that he might know who the true mother was. She was given the living child and went away rejoicing.

All the people heard of the great wisdom of King Solomon, and they saw that his wisdom came from above.

Solomon's Work.

THE special work Solomon had been called to do was to build the house of God. He had been king four years when he began. Every plan his father had made was carried out as nearly as possible, and he made many improvements.

The building was made of great stones. These were all made the proper shape in the wilderness before they were brought to Jerusalem. When they were brought and placed together, each stone was ready to take its proper place in the building. There was no sound of hammer, ax, or any other tool in the house of God while it was being built.

It would take too long to tell all about this great and beautiful building. But you can turn to the sixth chapter of 1 Kings, where all is explained.

God was pleased with this beautiful house. When it was done, Solomon called all Israel together. Then they placed the ark within the holiest place, and offered sacrifices unto God. "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone [blocks of stone with the ten commandments written on them], which Moses put there at Horeb."

After this Solomon prayed that God would bless the people, and that this house might be forever his home among them. God answered the prayer by sending fire from heaven, which burned up the sacrifice on the altar, and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

Then the people returned to their homes very happy and praising God.

This house that Solomon built was only a type of God's spiritual house, as this house is a building not made with hands. The stones

are all prepared in the wilderness or world, and are men and women, boys and girls.

Sins are like the rough corners on the stones. These are cut away by the word of God. Then that stone is placed in God's building.

God's spiritual house is a beautiful building. Jesus gave his blood that everything about it might be perfect. Eph. 5:25-27. He as David's greater Son built the true temple of the Lord. This is called the church or house of God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. 3:16. "Ye are God's building." 1 Cor. 3:9.

Visit of the Queen of Sheba.

WHEN the beautiful house of God was finished, Solomon built many other buildings. In all he did, he showed such great wisdom that everybody wondered. The many nations around heard how wise he was.

Solomon became so rich that he had everything his heart could think of or desire. So much had been said about his wisdom that the queen of Sheba came to see if it was true.

She asked Solomon many hard questions, but he answered them all. This seemed wonderful to her; but when she looked around and saw all the work Solomon had planned, she was astonished. She said the half of his wisdom had not been told her.

She had brought beautiful presents of gold, spices, and precious stones. These she gave to Solomon, and he gave her costly presents in return. She then went back to her home, wondering at his wisdom and thankful for the knowledge she had gained. He had told her all that was in her heart.

But with all his wisdom and wealth Solomon did not find real happiness.

In those days it was not thought wrong to have more than one

wife, and the Bible says Solomon had many wives. Some of these wives had been taught to worship idols.

Little by little Solomon yielded to his wives. At last he turned so far from the worship of the true God, that he worshiped idols.

Solomon did not repent of this as his father David did of his sins. For this reason God said the kingdom of Israel would be divided after Solomon's death. But God did not forget his promise to David.

God had promised David a son who would build the Lord's house, and said, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever." 2 Sam. 7:14-16.

God fulfilled this promise when Jesus was born. He descended from David and was Israel's true king.

Solomon wrote three books of the Bible—Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song. In these he tells of many heartaches he had endured because he had tried so hard to enjoy all the pleasures of life.

He said: "Whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor. . . . Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." But "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

Jeroboam and Rehoboam.

THERE was a young man among the children of Israel whose name was Jeroboam. One day a prophet named Ahijah met him as he was coming out of Jerusalem.

Jeroboam had on a new garment; and they two were alone in the

field. "And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces.

"And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee." 1 Kings 11:30, 31. "But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake."

God said he would do this because Solomon had forsaken him and was worshiping idols.

When Solomon heard what the prophet said, he tried to kill Jeroboam, for he wanted his son Rehoboam to be king in his place. But Jeroboam went and lived in Egypt until Solomon's death.

Solomon had not been careful to raise his son for the Lord; instead, he was humored and spoiled.

Now that the time had come for Rehoboam to be king, the people came to him with a request. In some ways Solomon had been cruel to them, and they asked Rehoboam to be more kind.

Rehoboam did not give them an answer at once, but told them to wait three days and he would tell them what he would do. He then called the old men who were his father's friends, and asked them what was best to do. They told him to be kind to the people, and they would choose him for their king and be his servants forever.

Then Rehoboam called the young men, and asked them what they thought would be best. They advised him to be more cruel to the people than his father had been. And Rehoboam foolishly took the advice of the young men. Young people often think they know the best way; but true wisdom is generally with those who are older and have had more experience.

In three days the people returned. Rehoboam told them that their burdens would be much heavier than they had been. He said that his little finger would be thicker than his father's waist, and that where his father had beaten them with whips, he would use scorpions, which were whips with many lashes.

When the people heard him say this, they said they would choose another king. Then all the people left him, except the tribe of Judah

and the tribe of Benjamin. The other ten tribes chose Jeroboam as their king.

Jeroboam was very wicked, so that all the priests and Levites left their cities, among the ten tribes, and went to Jerusalem to live. Then Jeroboam destroyed all the altars and places where sacrifices were offered and set up idols and golden calves to be worshiped.

This he did fearing the people would go up to Jerusalem and worship God. He was also afraid that when they saw the beautiful temple, and Rehoboam, they might still make him their king.

So now Israel was divided and had two kings.

The Strange Prophet.

JEROBOAM was a very wicked king. One day as he was offering incense upon the altar he had made for himself, God sent a prophet to tell him some things that were going to happen. This prophet was from Judah.

He said, "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests, of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

"And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

When King Jeroboam heard this strange man talking in this manner, he was angry and raised his hand and commanded the people, saying, "Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord."

When Jeroboam saw what had taken place, and that his hand was withered, he said to the man of God, "Entreat now the face of the Lord

thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again." The man of God prayed, and Jeroboam's hand was healed.

Three hundred and fifty-one years after this, King Josiah called together all the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments with all their hearts and all their souls. And he destroyed their idols, altars, and groves. And he put down the idolatrous priests who had been ordained to burn incense in the high places.

But when Josiah came to the altar which was at Bethel, and which Jeroboam had made, both that place and the high place he broke down and burned, and stamped it to powder, just as the prophet so many years before had told Jeroboam Josiah would do.

"And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it."

But now we come to the strange part about the prophet who prophesied against the altar and Jeroboam. God had told him he must neither eat bread nor drink water in that place, nor return by the same road over which he had come.

When Jeroboam's hand had been healed, he invited the prophet to go home with him and eat, and said he would give him a reward; but the prophet said, "If thou wilt give me the half of thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread, nor drink water in this place: for it was so charged me by the word of the Lord."

The Strange Prophet Is Slain.

"NOW there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

“And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.

“And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.

“Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

“He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art: and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.

“So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house and drink water.

“And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back: and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

“And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

“And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

“And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

“And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord: therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake unto him.

“And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him. And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass.

“And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him.

“And laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!

“And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried: lay my bones beside his bones: for the saying which he cried by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.” 1 Kings 13:11-32.

In after years, when Josiah was destroying the places of worship that Jeroboam had set up, and burning the bones of those who had done so wickedly, he saw an inscription and asked what it was. And the men of the city said, “It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel.”

And Josiah said, “Let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.”

A Sad Picture.

UNHAPPINESS and sin go hand in hand. God had made many promises to his people if only they would love and obey him; but much of the time they failed to do this.

When the people chose a king, God told them, through Samuel, what a change would come to pass. 1 Sam. 8:10-18. Still they said, "Nay, but we will have a king over us." Now they could look back and see what their foolish desire had brought them to. They could see the sad end of Saul and how his kingdom was taken from his seed forever.

In David things were brighter, because he looked to God for his strength.

Solomon began aright by asking wisdom and understanding from above, but he afterward let sin and idolatry creep in. Shortly before his death God sent a prophet of the name of Ahijah, who said that the kingdom should be divided after Solomon's death; that Rehoboam, Solomon's son, should reign over the tribe of Judah, with Benjamin, but ten tribes should be given to a man whose name was Jeroboam; and that there should be war between these two kings all their days.

Both kings were very wicked and did much evil in the Lord's sight; but for David's sake the kingdom of Judah was not taken away from Rehoboam. The people of Judah from this time on were known as Jews and the other ten tribes as Israel.

The end of Jeroboam reminds one of Saul. God-forsaken, Saul disguised himself and went to enquire of Samuel. He wanted to know what would happen concerning himself and his kingdom. Now Jeroboam did something much the same. His son was very sick. He expected some day this son would be king, and he wished to know whether the child would get well.

Then Jeroboam remembered the prophet Ahijah, who had told him he was to be king (1 Kings 11:28-40), and thought perhaps he could tell them what would become of the child. Jeroboam told his wife to dress so that the prophet would not know her, take a nice present, and go to him.

"And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see: for his eyes were set by reason of his age.

"And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus

shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.

“And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.” 1 Kings 14:4-6.

He told her that the child would die and the kingdom be taken from her husband. And God said he would give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam.

Even Judah would have been cut off for their horrible sins, had it not been for the faithfulness of God to the promise he made David. “Nevertheless for David’s sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem.” 1 Kings 15:4.

Asa and His Son Jehoshaphat.

JUDAH and Israel had many kings. Some were good, but the most of them were very wicked. We shall not try to write of many, but some good lessons may be drawn from a few of their lives.

Asa, the third king of Judah, was a good man and tried to do what was right in God’s sight. He destroyed all the idols his father had made and even had his grandmother, Maachah, removed from being queen. She had made an idol in a grove. This idol Asa burned by the brook Kidron.

“And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the Lord had given him rest.

“Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

“And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and four score thousand: all these were mighty men of valor.

“And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

“Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

“And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

“So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

“And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the Lord, and before his hosts; and they carried away very much spoil.” 2 Chron. 14: 6-13.

Although Asa tried to do what he thought would please God, he forgot, in a few instances, to look to the Lord for help.

In the thirty-sixth year of his reign he sent a present to the king of Syria. This present was gold and costly things taken from the Lord's house.

He asked this king to help him in time of battle. He did help him, but afterwards a prophet, whose name was Hanani, came to Asa and said, “Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

“Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand.

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth; to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.” 2 Chron. 16:7-9.

Toward the end of his life, Asa had a disease in his feet. Again he failed to look to the Lord for help, and did not trust God to heal him. He went to the physicians for help, just as he had gone to the king of Syria. How easily God could have healed him, and how gladly he would have done so, had Asa prayed, and trusted him.

Many people to-day do the very same thing. Instead of asking the Lord to heal them, they rush away after a physician. The Bible says, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.”

God had revealed himself to be the physician of his people (Ex. 15:26), and had promised to take sickness away from them. Ex. 23:25. King Asa knew these promises, but he did not seek help from the Lord in his sickness, but from the physician.

After his death his son Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. Jehoshaphat was a good king and tried to rule the people in the fear of God. He sent Levites around to all the cities to teach the people out of the law, which was the first five books of our Bible. This was all the Bible they had for many years.

Elijah and King Ahab.

AHAB, the eighth king of Israel, was a very wicked man, and his wife, Jezebel, was a vile woman. Together they did much to displease the Lord.

It was during the reign of Ahab that Jericho was rebuilt. We mentioned this event at the end of the chapter entitled “The City of Jericho.”

When we hear of how wicked Ahab and Jezebel were, we are not



ELIJAH ASKING FOOD OF THE WIDOW.

surprised to hear of God's sending judgment upon them in the form of a famine.

The prophet Elijah was chosen by God to tell Ahab that there would be no rain in the land for a long time.

God promised to take care of Elijah and give him food and water. God sent him to the brook Cherith, where he could drink of the water, and commanded the ravens to feed him there. Elijah went to this brook, and every night and morning the ravens brought him bread and meat.

But after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain. Then God sent him to Zarephath. In this town was a poor widow, whom God had chosen to give Elijah food to eat.

"So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

"And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

"And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son.

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

"And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman,



THE WIDOW PREPARES FOOD FOR ELIJAH.

the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

“And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?”

“And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

“And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?”

“And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child’s soul come into him again.

“And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

“And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

“And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.”
1 Kings 17:10-24.

The Famine Ends.

THE famine lasted about three years. Then God told Elijah to go to Ahab and tell him that he would again send rain upon the earth.

Ahab and Jezebel were both very angry with Elijah, and had commanded that all the prophets of the Lord be killed, thinking that Elijah in this way might be slain.

But God had spared Elijah’s life, and he had also spared one hundred other prophets by raising up a man named Obadiah, the

chief officer of Ahab's household. Obadiah hid these prophets in a cave and fed them with bread and water until they could escape.

So now, when God said, "Go to Ahab," Elijah went bravely, as the Lord had said.

On account of the famine, there was no grass for the animals; and Ahab and Obadiah went out to seek pasture for them.

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

"And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.

"Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

"So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel.

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." 1 Kings 18:17-21.

Elijah said, "I only am left on the Lord's side, but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

"Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken." 1 Kings 17:23, 24.

Then the sacrifices were prepared. The prophets of Baal called upon their god, saying, "O Baal, hear us," but they received no answer. At last they leaped upon the altar and called loudly, but to no effect; Baal could not hear them. They continued praying until evening for Baal to send fire to burn their sacrifice.

Elijah mocked them and said that perhaps their god was asleep, or was taking a journey.

At last the prophets of Baal were worn out through trying to make their god hear, and then Elijah told the people to come near while he repaired the Lord's altar. Elijah took twelve stones, and with these built an altar in the name of the Lord.

Elijah made a large trench around the altar; and when the sacrifice was all ready, he said, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

"And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water." 1 Kings 18:34, 35. And then Elijah prayed, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, the Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.

"And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there." 1 Kings 18:37-40.

Elijah Prays for Rain.

ELIJAH had prophesied that there was to be a great famine in the land, as a punishment to king Ahab; and it was so. Now Elijah felt that the famine was over, and by faith he could hear the rain falling. He said to Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

"So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put

his face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

“And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.” 1 Kings 18:41-44.

How great was Elijah’s faith, and how faithful God was to answer prayer. Once, twice, yes, seven times, Elijah prayed; and as soon as he heard that there was a cloud the size of a man’s hand, he sent word to Ahab, saying, “Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.” And the rain came until there was an abundance.

But now Elijah was to meet another trial. When Jezebel heard that he had slain the prophets of Baal, she sent a messenger to him, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.”

God sometimes gives his people a great victory and blessing just before they have to meet a severe trial. Perhaps to prepare them, that they may be more able to overcome the trial, and have their faith increased. But Elijah for a short time seemed to forget all that God had done for him in the past.

When he received Jezebel’s message, he fled, with his servant, into the wilderness. Then he went away by himself and sat down under a juniper-tree and prayed that he might die. He said, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.”

Poor Elijah! One would not have expected him to become discouraged in this way. But God was caring for him just the same. This was simply a test.

That night while he slept, an angel touched him and said, “Arise and eat.” “And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

“And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

“And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

“And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold,



ELIJAH FED BY THE RAVENS.

the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

“And he said, I have been jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

“And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent



GOD SENDING FOOD TO ELIJAH.

the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

“And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?” 1 Kings 19:6-13.

Elijah tried to excuse himself for hiding and wishing that he might die, and said, “I, even I, only am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.” Then the Lord encouraged him.

God said that there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, nor kissed him. Elijah must have felt encouraged when he heard this.

God sent him back and told him to anoint a new king over Israel. From this on God’s judgments fell upon Ahab.

The Vineyard of Naboth.

DURING Ahab’s reign there was close to his palace a vineyard, that he coveted. It belonged to a man named Naboth. Ahab thought the vineyard would make him such a nice garden. He offered to buy it, but the vineyard had belonged to Naboth’s father, and Naboth felt that he could not part with it.

Ahab did not think or care about the feelings of others; he only thought the vineyard would be nice for him to use as a garden.

Naboth refused to give up the vineyard, and this made Ahab very angry, and he would not eat. When Jezebel heard why her husband was feeling bad, she told him to arise, and she would see that the vineyard was his.

“So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

“And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.” 1 Kings 21:8-10.

The men of the city did as Jezebel told them, and then sent her word that Naboth had been stoned to death. When Jezebel heard that Naboth was dead, she told Ahab; and he went to take possession of the vineyard.

Once more the Lord sent Elijah to Ahab with a bitter message. He said, “Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.”

Then Ahab said to Elijah, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.”

Ahab was very sorry when he heard of this terrible punishment, and he humbled himself. Because of Ahab’s humbling himself God said this evil should not come to pass while Ahab lived, but it should come in his son’s days. and it did. Read 2 Kings 9:25, 26, 30-37, and 10:8-11.

Great and terrible is the wrath of our God when it is sent upon the children of disobedience: and it is sure to come.

Elijah’s Successor.

GOD told Elijah to anoint a young man named Elisha to be prophet in his stead after his work on earth was ended.

This young man was ploughing in a field with twelve yoke of oxen when Elijah found him. As Elijah passed by, he threw his

mantle over Elisha. By this, Elisha knew that God had chosen him to be a prophet.

He went home and made a feast for his friends, and then bade them farewell. After this he went to live with Elijah.

One day as these two prophets were walking along, Elijah told Elisha to wait at a certain place. But Elisha said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

"And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

"And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho.

"And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

"And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

"And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

"And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

"And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

"And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

"And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if



ELISHA IS CALLED TO BE A PROPHET.

thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

“And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

“He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

“And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.” 2 Kings 2:3-15.

When the people saw that Elijah was gone, they asked Elisha that they might go and look for him. For, they said, the Spirit of the Lord might have taken Elijah up and cast him upon a mountain, or into some valley.

Elisha said not to go; but when they urged him to send them, he at last gave his consent. Fifty men went and searched three days, but could not find Elijah, for God had taken him up to heaven. When they returned, Elisha said, “Did I not say unto you, Go not?”

Elisha was in Jerico at this time. There was no good water in the place; so Elisha put salt in the spring, and by the power of God the water was made good.

Elisha left this place and went to Bethel. On the way many little children came out of a certain city and mocked him. They said, “Go up, thou baldhead; go up, thou baldhead.” No doubt they said this because of what had happened to Elijah.

When Elisha saw the children mocking him, he pronounced a curse upon them in the name of the Lord. And two bears came out



ELIJAH GOES UP TO HEAVEN.

of the woods and tore forty-two of the children in pieces. Thus, God taught the people to respect his prophets. Never laugh at any one who is lame or blind, or a person with any physical imperfection, as Elisha. God does not let such things go unpunished.



BEARS EAT THE WICKED CHILDREN.

Elisha the Man of God.

AS the days passed by Elisha increased in power and might with God. He did many miracles.

At one time a widow came to him and said her husband was dead. Her husband had been in debt, she said, and now his creditor had come to take her two sons as payment for what he owed.

Elisha was very sorry for her and asked what she had in her house. She answered, "Nothing save a pot of oil."

Then Elisha said: "Go, borrow thee vessels of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour

out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

“So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.

“And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.

“Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.”
2 Kings 4:3-7.

We can draw some beautiful thoughts from this little story.

First, when we have some talent, God will increase it and cause it to become great if we use it as he says and trust him to increase it.

Second, Elisha told the widow to borrow many empty vessels, and the oil did not fail until every vessel was full.

Third, the oil was to be used at once in paying her debts.

This oil might be compared to salvation, which will not fail as long as there is an empty vessel, or soul, to receive it. Those who profess to be saved should remember that they owe to all men a debt of love. They also have in their possession something that belongs to others as well as to themselves.

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Rom. 13:8, 10.

Those who have salvation and are lovingly teaching others, or doing what they can to send the gospel to others, that they may be saved, are thus paying their debt.

One day Elisha came to Shunem, where a rich woman lived. He had passed her house many times, and she felt that he was a good man; so she asked him to stop and eat. After that as often as he passed by, he stopped and ate the food she set out for him. At last she spoke to her husband, and they built him a little room where he could stop and rest.

One time while in this room Elisha told his servant to bring the woman there. When she came, he asked her how he could pay her for all her kindness, and asked if he should speak to the king for her. But

she was not seeking any pay for what she had done, and then left the room.

Elisha called the woman again and told her that as she had no child God would give her a son. At first she could not believe this, but it was true, for in less than a year she had a son.

The child grew, and one day went out to his father, who was in the field with the reapers. While there he felt sick and cried out, "My head, my head." His father told a servant to carry him home. There his mother held him in her lap until about noon, when he died.

When the mother saw that her son was dead, she carried him up to Elisha's room and laid him upon the bed. She then went to find Elisha, and when she saw him, she fell upon her face and explained that her child was dead. Elisha was very sorry for her and hastened to the place where the child was laid.

"And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

"He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.

"And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

"Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

"And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

"Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out." 2 Kings 4:32-37.

Was not this a wonderful thing that Elisha did? Elisha's prayer had been that he might be as great a prophet as Elijah. He was told that he might be if he saw Elijah taken up to heaven. God kept his promise, for Elisha was doing the same miracles that Elijah had done before him.

More about Elisha.

ONE time, when the prophets were gathered together, Elisha told his servant to set the great pot on the fire and cook some pottage for them to eat. There was a famine in the land at this time and food was very scarce.



NAAMAN BATHES IN THE RIVER.

One of the men went out into the field and found a wild vine and gathered gourds from it and put them in with the pottage. As they were eating they cried out, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof.

"But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot." 2 Kings 4:41.

Then a man came and brought to Elisha twenty loaves of barley and some grain. Elisha ordered this set before the men that they might eat, but his servant thought it would not be a taste among so many. Elisha then said, "Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord."

In Syria there was a great and brave man. His name was Naaman and the king of Syria thought much of him for the many noble things he had done. But Naaman was taken with the dreadful disease of leprosy, for which there was no cure.

The people of Syria were heathen, or those who worshiped idols. Some of these heathen people used often to come into Canaan and rob and hurt the Hebrews. Sometimes they would take children and make them their servants.

Once these Syrians took away a little girl from the children of Israel, and sold her to a rich lady in their country to be her slave. The name of this lady's husband was Naaman.

Then it was that the little Hebrew maid had a chance to testify for the Lord. Was she afraid to do so because she was among strange people, who knew nothing of God? Oh, no. She was old enough to know the Lord would heal people, and she said, "I wish that my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy."

When Naaman heard this, he was filled with hope; but he did not know it was God who would heal him.

The king of Syria sent to the king of Israel a nice present, and a letter asking the king to heal Naaman. And Naaman, who was proud, went into Canaan in grand style. He expected to be shown a great deal of respect, for he was honored so much in his own country. But in this he was disappointed.

When this message was received, the king of Israel could not understand what was meant by it. He said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" He thought it must be a trick to bring on a war.



THE LITTLE CAPTIVE MAID.

But when Elisha heard of the message, and that the king had rent his clothes, he sent to ask why he had done this. Elisha told the king to send Naaman to him and Naaman should know that God had a prophet in Israel.

So Naaman drove up and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. "And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

"But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

"And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

"Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." 2 Kings 5:10-14.

Then Naaman returned to Elisha's house and said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."

Naaman wanted to give Elisha a present, but Elisha said he would not receive any, and so Naaman started to return home.

The story of Elisha is long and filled with many good things, but the reader can turn to his Bible and read there the accounts for himself.

In 2 Kings 5:20-27 is the story of Gehazi, Elisha's servant. It is a warning to all to tell the truth, and not to covet things that do not belong to them.

The first seven verses of the next chapter tell about Elisha's causing an ax to float on the water. From the eighth to the twenty-third verses is an account of how God through Elisha delivered the children of Israel from the Syrians. And the remainder of the chapter

is an account of a woman who because of the great famine in the city of Samaria boiled her own son and helped to eat him. You can get your Bible and read these accounts for yourself.

In 2 Kings 8:1-6 something more is found about the Shunammite woman who was so kind to Elisha.

2 Kings 13:14-19 is an account of Elisha on his death-bed; and the twentieth and twenty-first verses tell of a dead man who came to life upon being cast into Elisha's sepulchre.



JONAH AND THE GREAT FISH.

Jonah.

WE read in the Bible of a man named Jonah. He was a prophet of God that lived about one hundred years before the downfall of the city of Samaria and the carrying away into captivity of the children of Israel who lived there. Jonah is mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25.

God told him that he must go to Nineveh, the people of which were very wicked. The Lord told Jonah to go and warn them of their danger, that they might repent. God said he would destroy their city if they did not do this.

Jonah did not want to go, and he did something that many little children have done when they did not care to do what their parents told them to do. Jonah ran away.

He found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went down into it, to get away from the presence of the Lord.

How strange for a prophet to think he could run away from the Lord! God knew all about Jonah and just where he was hiding.

After the ship had started, a great storm arose and blew the ship about so fiercely that it was about to go to pieces. The sailors were so frightened that they called upon their gods. Their goods were thrown overboard, and they did everything they could to lighten the ship. Still their danger kept on increasing.

They cast lots to find for whose cause the storm had been sent upon them, and the lot fell upon Jonah, whom they had taken into their ship. Jonah was down in the hold; and he lay fast asleep.

"So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

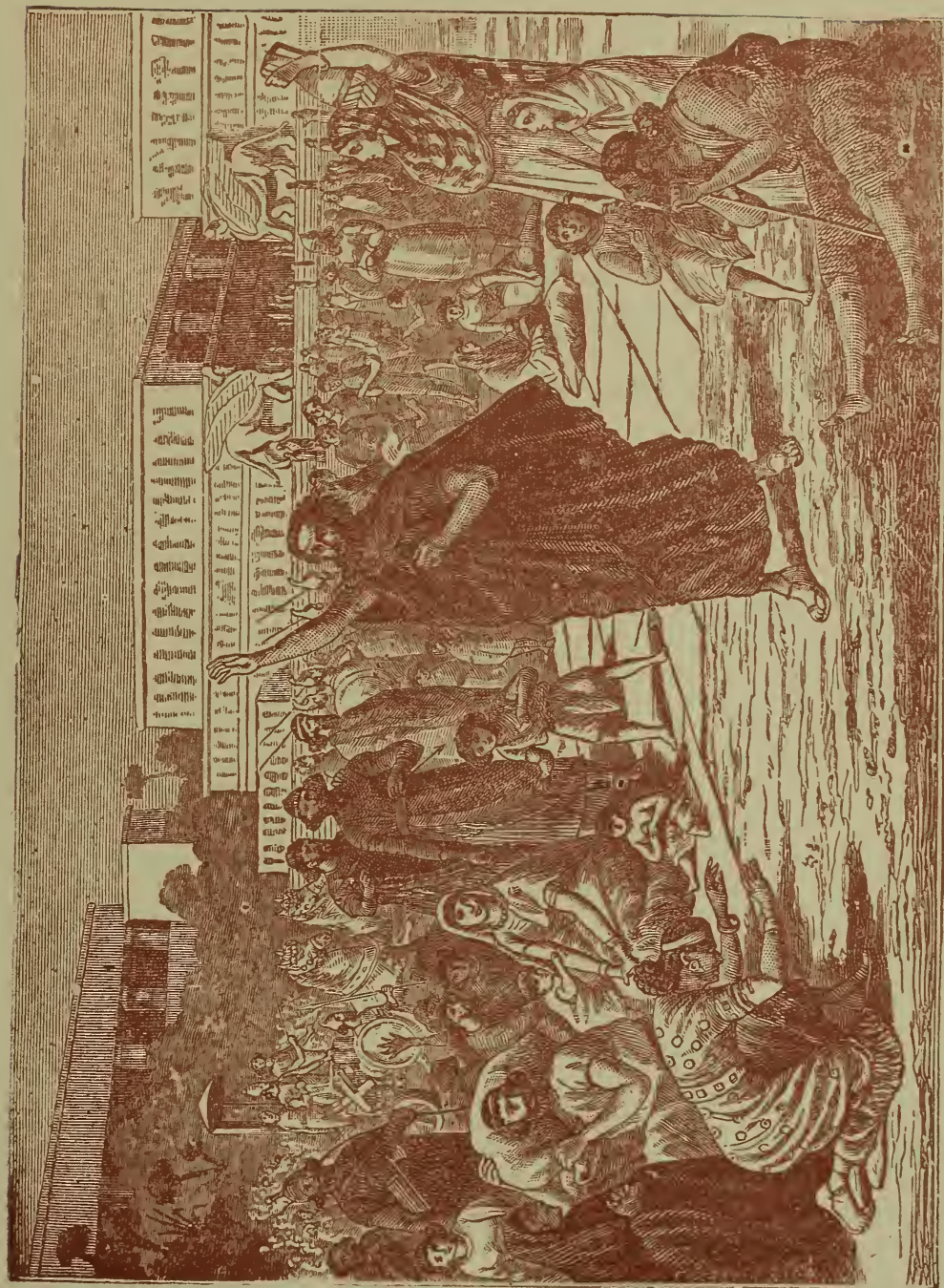
"And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

"Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

"And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.

"Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the



JONAH WARNS THE PEOPLE OF NINEVEH

sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

“And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

“Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

“Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man’s life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

“So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

“Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

“Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”
Jonah 1:6-17.

How much better it would have been for Jonah, had he obeyed the Lord at first.

Jonah was inside this great fish three days and three nights. While there he prayed earnestly to the Lord. He cried for help and asked God to forgive his sins, and he promised to obey the Lord in the future. He said, “I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.”

Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry ground.

Once again the Lord said to Jonah, “Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.”

This time Jonah went. The journey to Nineveh was about five hundred miles. He told the people that in forty days Nineveh would be overthrown.

When the people heard this, they were sorry for their sins. The king of Nineveh proclaimed a fast and told every one to pray. He also said that no animal, herd, or flock should eat anything. “Who

can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

“And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.” Jonah 3:9, 10.

But this did not please Jonah. He knew that the people of Nineveh were not friends to the Jews, and, then, he was not humble enough to have the people laugh at him and say that his words did not come true.

Again Jonah acted as some children do when things do not go their way: he went away to pout. He even said he wished he could die. This shows how unhappy people can be when they are not humble and willing for God to have his own way with them.

Jonah went out of the city and sat down, and waited to see if his words would come true. God must have pitied him; for he caused a gourd vine to grow up quickly and shield him from the hot sun.

Jonah was glad when he saw the gourd. But the next day God prepared a worm to gnaw the root of the vine, and it soon dried up.

When the sun arose, God sent a hot wind, and the sun beat on Jonah's head. The heat soon made him very sick, and he fainted. Then Jonah said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

Oh, what tender mercy the Lord has! He said to Jonah, “Doeſt thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he ſaid, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then ſaid the Lord, Thou haſt had pity on the gourd, for the which thou haſt not labored, neither maदेſt it grow; which came up in a night, and periſhed in a night: and ſhould not I ſpare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than ſixſcore thouſand perſons that can not diſcern between their right hand and their left hand; and alſo much cattle?” Jonah 4:9-11.

Job.

IN the land of Uz was a man named Job. He is ſuppoſed to have been king of Edom about the time the children of Iſrael left Egypt.

Job was a very good man and loved God with all his heart. He was very rich, and had everything any one could wish to make him happy.

The Lord loved him, because he saw that he tried to do right; and he gave him seven sons and three daughters.

When his children were old enough to have homes of their own, they made feasts. Then they would meet together and have merry times.

Job kept reminding them of their duty toward God and would offer sacrifices for them; for Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts."

But there was a time when a great change came over Job. He lost all his wealth, his children, and everything he had. This happened to him as a test, to see if he would still be true to God if he was poor. In all this Job did not complain.

Then a dreadful disease came on him. This disease, like as do many others, came directly from Satan. "So went Satan forth, . . . and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes." Job 2:7, 8.

We see that the disease did not come from above, from God. "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Jas. 1:16, 17.

Because of these boils Job began to suffer very much. While he was suffering his wife came and said, "Dost thou still trust God? Do so no more. Curse God and die." But Job told her she spoke as a foolish woman. He said they had received much good from the Lord in the past, now they must not find fault with God if evil came upon them. In all this, Job did not commit sin or do anything to displease God.

Job had three friends, who heard of his trouble and came to see him one day. When they saw him from a distance, such a change had come over Job that they did not know him. They rent their clothes and wept.

These friends thought that Job's trouble had been brought upon him for some great sin he had done.

They did not speak to him for a long time. When they did, they told him if he had done wrong, to confess it to God and promise never to do so again; then God would free him from his pains.

Job knew he had always tried to live as he should, and these words only made him suffer more. He told them if they were in such trouble as he was, he also could say many hard things about them; but that he would say only words of comfort, and try to make their grief less.

Job was in such pain that he could not get any rest. If he fell asleep, he would have such terrible dreams. Then life became a burden, and he was sorry he had ever been born.

His friends, instead of encouraging him and telling him to seek strength from God, did and said much to discourage him, and weaken his faith in God.

At last Job could stand no more, and he began to complain of their way of treating him, but they continued to find fault with him.

Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the whirlwind. He was reminded of the many things God had done—that he had created the earth, and caused the grass and flowers to grow; that he made the clouds and caused the rain to fall; of the heat and cold and the many other wonderful things he had done.

The Lord asked if Job was able to do any of these wonders, or if he were able to teach God how to do them.

“Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withheld from thee. . . . I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Then God said to one of Job's three friends that he was angry with them, for they had not spoken that which was right to his servant Job.

God said they must offer a burnt sacrifice for themselves and have Job pray for them, or they should be punished. And Job prayed, and they were forgiven.

“Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.” “So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.”

King Hezekiah.

AFTER the death of Elisha the people of Israel continued to grow more and more wicked. God raised up other prophets, who warned them of their danger; but they would not repent, and live as God wanted them to.

At last God determined to send a great punishment to all the people of Israel. You shall hear what it was.

There was a king in the country of Assyria, who was very rich. He had many soldiers under him, who were brave and strong. But this king was a heathen and knew nothing of God.

This king came, with his great army of men, into the land of Canaan. They fought against the people and conquered them. They got into all their towns, and took the people of Israel away to be their slaves. How unhappy the people of Israel must have been to be taken away from their homes and forced to go a long way off and work very hard!

This was the punishment God sent them at last because they would worship idols and do so many wicked things. They were never permitted to come into their own country again, but heathen people came and lived there.

You remember it was on account of worshiping idols that God was angry with King Solomon. And for this reason God said that Solomon's son Rehoboam should be king over only part of Canaan. What God said came true. Jeroboam, Solomon's servant, took away a great deal of the land from Rehoboam. Jeroboam was called the king of Israel, and Solomon's son was called the king of Judah.

Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem, where the beautiful temple was, which his father, Solomon, had made. But Jeroboam lived in the other part of the land. Rehoboam and the people living in Jerusalem were called Jews, and the rest of the people were known as Israel.



HEZEKIAH LAYING THE LETTER BEFORE GOD.

There were many kings, both of the Jews and of Israel; but God remembered his promise to King David. You can find it in 2 Sam. 7: 12-16.

When Rehoboam, Solomon's son, died, his son became king of the Jews; and when he died, his son was king—and so on one generation after another. Some of these kings were good, and some were very wicked.

At last there was a good king, called Hezekiah. He was the thirteenth king of Judah, and he lived at Jerusalem. Hezekiah loved to worship God in the temple. He persuaded a great many people to come and worship there with him, and destroyed the images and idols which they had been worshiping. Among these was the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness. It had been carefully kept until this time as a precious relic and was among their idols.

These acts of Hezekiah pleased the Lord very much, and you shall hear what care God took of him.

The king of Assyria had taken away the people of Israel and made them his slaves. Would the Jews be taken also? Everything seemed to say, "Yes," but hear what God did.

The heathen king did not think of defeat. He brought his great army, and they pitched their tents around Jerusalem and tried to get inside.

The Jews shut the gates fast; still they were afraid the soldiers would get inside at last. But Hezekiah knew that God would keep the Jews from getting hurt. He said, "Be strong and courageous; be not afraid for the king of Assyria, nor the multitude that is with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles." Then the Jews were encouraged.

The people of Assyria spoke many wicked words against God and even wrote letters. In these letters the king said the Jews must give the city of Jerusalem up to them, for God would not save them. He said the gods of other nations had not been able to save them. But this time the wicked king was deceived. He knew there was no strength in the gods of other nations, but he did not know about Hezekiah's God.

It made Hezekiah very sad when he read the letter and heard their evil words. He went into the temple and spread the letter before the Lord and then began to pray. He said, "O Lord, thou art the God. Thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down thine ear and hear. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only."

God heard Hezekiah's prayer. He sent Isaiah the prophet to say concerning the king of Assyria: "He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, saith the Lord. For I will save this city, for my servant David's sake."

That night God sent an angel, who destroyed many of the Assyrians. He did not kill them all, but the rest were so frightened that they went back to their homes. Thus God saved Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all the Jews from being destroyed.

Hezekiah Is Healed.

HOW kind God was to King Hezekiah! Surely he was encouraged to trust the Lord.

He taught the people to worship God in the right way and took David for his great model. They met in the temple, which had been cleansed from all its idols, and they sang the beautiful psalms of David with gladness in their hearts. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped God.

And Hezekiah taught them the wise sayings of Solomon, and it was said of Hezekiah that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor any that were before him.

When he had been king of Judah about fourteen years, he was taken very sick. One day the prophet Isaiah came to him and said, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live."

Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed. He told the Lord to remember how he had lived, and that he had always tried to do what was right in God's sight; and then Hezekiah wept.

The Lord heard Hezekiah's prayer, and told Isaiah, who had not yet left the palace, to return and say, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

Hezekiah was very happy when he heard this, but felt that he should like to have a sign, that he might know God would heal him; and God said he would give him a sign. 2 Kings 20:9.

In those days they did not have clocks, such as we have. They told the time of day by the shadow of the sun falling upon some object or dial. It would be an easy matter to alter the time of the day denoted by our clock, for we could turn the hands backward, or forward; but the sun could not be moved in this way.

So when Hezekiah heard that God would move the shadow of the sun either backward or forward, ten degrees, as a sign that he should be healed, he said to move it backward, and God did so.

And Hezekiah was healed as God said he would be.

King Hezekiah's healing was so wonderful that the heathen nations heard of it, and wondered at it. At one time the king of Babylon sent letters and beautiful presents to Hezekiah. The men who brought the letters and presents desired to see inside the temple, for they had heard of the costly treasures there.

Although Hezekiah knew that all he had, had been given him, only through God's great mercy, yet his heart was lifted up with the praise, and he did not give God all the glory.

For this cause God sent Isaiah to him once more. This time he came with a reproof. Isaiah asked him what things he had shown to the men sent by the king of Babylon, and Hezekiah said, "All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.

"And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord.

Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord." 2 Kings 20:16, 17.

Hezekiah was very sorry for having grieved the Lord; and because he was so sorry, God said this trouble should not come upon the people of Judah while he lived.

Jerusalem Is Captured.

AT last the time came for Hezekiah to die. After his death there were many kings over Judah. Most of them were very wicked, and all the good Hezekiah had done in destroying the idols was undone by their evil ways. And again the people were worshiping idols.

God sent prophets to tell them that the dreadful things Isaiah had prophesied, were going to happen; but the people would not listen, and punished the prophets for saying such things.

Once more a heathen king came, with all his army of brave soldiers, and pitched their tents around the city of Jerusalem. But this time it was the king of Babylon, that brave and strong man Nebuchadnezzar.

Now was the beginning of many sorrows. Nebuchadnezzar and his men broke down the strong walls around Jerusalem. This might have been done many times before but then God took care of them and fought their battles. Now they had slighted God so much that he left them to meet their enemy alone.

It did not take the soldiers long to destroy the fine houses, and they took away many of the treasures to put in the house of their idols. They took all the brave and strong men to be their slaves, but left the poorer people there. Over these poor people Nebuchadnezzar placed Gedaliah as governor.

How unhappy the people who were taken captive must have been! Still, they hoped that some day soon they would return home again.

There was a king of Judah named Zedekiah, and Nebuchadnezzar had confidence in him and thought he was a good man. But Zedekiah

deceived Nebuchadnezzar by making him think he was willing to remain in bondage. He then went to the king of Egypt and asked him to help the Jews fight against the people of Babylon.

When Nebuchadnezzar heard what Zedekiah had done, he was very angry. He took a large army; and although the king of Egypt helped the Jews, the people of Babylon overcame them all.

Then they either destroyed or took away every article that was of any value in Jerusalem, and took many more of the people captive. Besides all this, they utterly destroyed the walls around Jerusalem, and the beautiful temple Solomon had built.

Only the very poorest of the Jews were left and they without any homes. Gedaliah, their governor, tried to be very kind to them, and told them not to be afraid; but one night he was killed, and then they fled in terror to Egypt.

Nebuchadnezzar was very angry with Zedekiah for the way he had done. He killed his sons; and this was the last sight Zedekiah saw, for both of his eyes were put out. Then he was taken back to Babylon, and put in prison until he died.

For the first time, the Jews realized what their sins had brought them to. They would not listen to the good old prophets' warnings in the past to turn from their idols. Now they were forced to see their words were true.

In their sorrow they sat down beside the rivers of Babylon and wept. They could not sing psalms as they used to do, but they hanged their harps upon the willow-trees that grew beside the water.

Why did God let this happen to his people? It was because they would not love and obey him and turn from their idols.

You see how hard it was for them to keep from idol-worship. It is just the same to-day. We may have an idol much more foolish than some of theirs were. It may be in the form of a new dress, a hat, a doll, or a bird; but if we love it so much that our minds are upon it continually, it becomes our idol, and we are worshiping it. O see that you love the Lord more than any other object! then you need not be afraid of any idols setting themselves up in your hearts.



THE JEWS IN CAPTIVITY.

Jeremiah's Prophecy; or, Story of the Figs.

AT one time Jeremiah had a vision. He saw two baskets filled with figs. One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad.

Then the Lord said: "Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord."

And the evil figs were compared to Zedekiah and his sad end.

So you see from this little story of the figs that there were some very good people, as well as bad, carried away from Jerusalem.

Among these good people were four young men. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These four men Nebuchadnezzar chose to have with him in his court, as they were very wise. And he changed their names to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He appointed them a daily portion of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank, and ordered that they be taught in all the wisdom of the land.

When Daniel heard this, he purposed in his heart that he would not do anything to displease the Lord. So when the rich food and wine was brought to him, he requested the steward to let him and his brethren eat vegetables and have water to drink.

The steward did not like to do this, for fear they would not look as well as the rest of the young men of their sort; but he loved Daniel and wanted to please him. Daniel said to let them eat this simple food for ten days, and if they did not look better at the end of that time than those who ate the king's fare, then they would say no more.

The steward consented to this, and at the end of ten days they

looked so much better than those who had eaten the king's meat that they were allowed to eat what they chose.

God gave these young men much wisdom and understanding. And Daniel could understand all visions and dreams. Nebuchadnezzar found that their wisdom far exceeded that of all the wise men in Babylon.

Daniel Interprets the King's Dream.

ONE night the king had a dream; and when he awoke, he had forgotten what it was. But the dream troubled him. He could not sleep.

He wished so much to know the meaning of the dream that he called all the wise men in the land and said they must either tell him the dream and what it meant, or die. This was a very rash thing for the king to do, but he felt that he must know about the dream.

The men said they could not tell the king what his dream meant without first knowing the dream. They said he must tell the dream, or they could not interpret it. This made the king angry, and he ordered that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain.

When it was seen that the king was in earnest, the captain of the king's guard went to gather the wise men together. This included Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

When Daniel heard that they were to be killed, he went to the king and asked that they might have a little time. For Daniel said that he would make known the interpretation of the dream.

The king consented, and that night the secret was revealed to Daniel. Oh, how happy Daniel was! He did not become exalted and take the praise to himself. No, he said, "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever: for wisdom and might are his. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."

When Daniel went in before the king, he told him that the matter which the wise men could not reveal had been made known unto him by the God in heaven.

The dream was very strange, and also the interpretation.

The king was so overcome that he fell upon his face and worshiped Daniel. And Nebuchadnezzar said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings."

"Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon."

Then Daniel requested the king, and he made his three brethren judges over the affairs of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the king's gate.

The Fiery Furnace.

ONE time Nebuchadnezzar made a very large image out of gold. It took a great deal of labor to make it, and it was higher than a very tall tree. It was placed out of doors, and the king sent for all the great and rich people to come and see it. And he said all the captains, governors, and judges must be there.

Now Nebuchadnezzar had made judges of the three young men that were with Daniel, and they were obliged to come and see the golden image.

When all the people were gathered around the image, a man cried, "O people, when the music begins, you must all fall down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar has set up." And the man said that whoever would not fall down and worship should be cast into a burning fiery furnace. This was a place like a large oven full of fire. What a terrible threat!

At the appointed time the music began, and the people fell down before the image and worshiped it—that is, all except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Then some men came to Nebuchadnezzar and said, "O king, live forever." And then they asked if he did not say that whoever would



FOUR BRAVE BOYS.

not fall down and worship the image should be cast into the fiery furnace. Then they told him that there were three Jews who had not done this.

It made Nebuchadnezzar very angry not to be obeyed, and so called these men and said, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" Nebuchadnezzar said he would give them one more chance, and then if they still refused to worship the image, they must be cast into the furnace.

But they answered, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Oh, how angry this made Nebuchadnezzar! His face grew dark with rage, and he commanded his men to heat the furnace seven times more than they usually did. The young men were then bound and thrown into the fire.

The heat was so great that those who threw the men into the furnace died before they could get away; but the three young men fell down into the midst of the fire.

Then as the king was watching to see them burn up, he rose suddenly and asked, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered, "True, O king." But he said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the mouth of the furnace and called, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." And they came forth out of the fire.

"And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

“Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

“Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

“Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.” Dan. 3:27-30.

Four Brave Boys.

Here we have a story, children,
That will make you glad I know;
For it shows how God rewardeth
All who trust him here below.

’Tis about a land of beauty,
Which was filled with wondrous wealth,
And four boys held there in bondage,
Sturdy lads in bloom of health.

From their homes these lads were taken,
E’en from Canaan’s land so fair,
And their home town was in ashes—
Oh, how hard it was to bear!

But these boys were lads of courage,
All had hearts both brave and true,
And they loved the God of heaven,
Yes, and their God loved them, too.

BEAUTIFUL STORIES

Ev'ry day they prayed in worship,
Hoping for the time to come
When they could return to Canaan,
Their much longed-for happy home.

Now, this land where they'd been taken,
And which held such wealth and power,
Where the heathen king sat stately,
There beneath his steepled tow'r,

Was none other than Chaldea,
And this city Babylon great,
Where the brave king Nebuchadnezzar
Sat and ruled in royal state.

And the boys were Hebrew children;
I will introduce them so
You will know: 'twas Daniel, Mechach,
Shadrach, and Abednego.

Daniel was most highly favored,
For God helped him to reveal
Dreams and visions that were hidden;
But no pride did Daniel feel.

Daniel was one day brought quickly,
Told to stand before the throne
And reveal a dream forgotten,
Also make its meaning known.

Just imagine what a moment,
Knowing if he could not tell,
Then his life would soon be taken,
With the wise men's there as well.

Well, that night God came to Daniel
And the strange dream there made known,
And revealed its wondrous meaning
For the king upon the throne.

In the morning Daniel hurried
To the king and told him all;
Later he advised him hasten
All his wrong deeds to recall.

When the king heard Daniel's wisdom
And he knew from whence it came,
He was filled with awe and wonder,
And made Daniel one of fame.

And he said, "Make Daniel ruler
Of the people and the land,
For none other here in Babylon
Can such deep things understand."

And the king permitted Daniel
To promote his three friends, too;
So he made them rule as judges,
But to their God they were true.

Later on the king of Babylon
Made an image out of gold,
And he set it up, commanding
Worship from both young and old.

And a herald cried, "O people,
When the music you do hear,
You must fall before this image,
There to worship it in fear."

Thus it was the three brave children
Daniel placed as rulers there
Now were forced to gather quickly
To take part in this affair.

They each heard the danger threatened
If the king's law they'd refuse;
But their hearts were full of courage,
They would not the wrong way choose.

Even though the fiery furnace
Now was open to their view,
They stood bravely there and answered,
“This thing we will never do.

“If it be that we are punished
By thy hand this day, O king,
We do know our God is able
From this furnace us to bring.”

Then the king in dreadful anger
Made this wild and stern demand,
That they heat the furnace hotter
And fulfil his fierce command.

This was done: these Hebrew children
In the furnace there were thrown;
But their God came to their rescue,
They were not left there alone.

When the king looked in the furnace,
He beheld a wondrous sight;
For he saw the Hebrew children
Walking there with faces bright.

Then he said to them, “Come hither,”
And he looked their bodies o’er;
But he saw they were not injured,
Were just as they’d been before.

Oh, what wonder filled this heathen!
And what awe he must have felt
As he viewed these Hebrew children
With whom he’d so harshly dealt!

That great image was forgotten
When he saw God’s strength and pow’r,
And he said that ev’ry nation
God must worship from that hour.

Once again a king was reigning
In that far-off heathen land,
One who knew and honored Daniel
And his views and godly stand.

Now, this king had signed a writing
Gotten up by evil men
Who had jealous hearts t'ward Daniel,
But he did not know it then.

In this writing it was stated
That the people ev'rywhere
Must of none there ask a favor,
Only of the king, through prayer.

But brave Daniel never faltered;
Op'ning up his windows wide,
Prayed to God, and eager listeners
Quickly heard him from outside.

Now the writing also stated,
Ev'ry one who'd disobey
Must be thrown in to the lions
As a punishment that day.

When the news was brought of Daniel,
How to God that day he'd prayed,
Then the king could see his error,
And he would the wrong have stayed.

But in this he failed; so Daniel
To the lions' den was brought,
Where those evil men were waiting
For the one whose life they sought.

All that night the king was troubled,
As he thought of Daniel's fate;
Could it be that God would save him?
Ah! this king could scarcely wait.

In the morning very early
All alone this king we find,
Calling loudly unto Daniel,
To relieve his troubled mind.

Daniel answered, "Yes, an angel
God hath sent to stay with me;
For no wrong had I committed,
Either 'gainst my God or thee."

Daniel then the king delivered,
But his enemies who'd dared
Plan this cruel way to slay him
Very soon their own plot shared.

There no angel came to help them
In this hungry lion's den;
So the lions soon devoured
Flesh and bones of these vile men.

But the God whom Daniel worshiped
Then this king said all must fear,
And at once sent forth a writing
To all people far and near.

Children dear, it pays to worship
And obey the living God,
Even though we for the moment
May receive the chast'ning rod.

Like the four brave Hebrew children,
Let your courage never fail;
God will help in ev'ry battle,
In his strength you can prevail.



The Proud King Nebuchadnezzar Is Humbled.

YOU have read of the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had, and that, when he had forgotten it, Daniel told him all the dream, and also the interpretation thereof. Once again the king had a dream. After the wise men of Babylon could not interpret the dream, Daniel came in.

Now Nebuchadnezzar thought so much of Daniel that he named him Belteshazzar for one of his idols. When Daniel came, the king said, "O Belteshazzar, I know that no secret is withheld from thee; therefore tell me the visions of my dream and the interpretation thereof."

This was the dream: Nebuchadnezzar saw a great, tall tree, which was very beautiful. It was so large that the beasts of the field were sheltered by its shadow, and the fowls of the air lodged in its branches. Soon he saw a holy one come down from heaven, who cried, "Hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. But leave the stump of the tree in the earth."

This was not all of the dream, but the rest is hard to understand, and we will pass on to the interpretation.

Daniel was sorry when he heard the dream, for he and the king had become real friends; but he was true to Nebuchadnezzar, and told him just what it all meant. It was this: Nebuchadnezzar was the tree. And as the branches and leaves were taken away from the tree, leaving only the stump in the earth; just so the kingdom and riches would all be taken away from Nebuchadnezzar. God would leave him upon the earth, but his reason should leave him and he should wander about and eat grass with the beasts of the field.

All this was to happen because Nebuchadnezzar was so proud, and would not turn from his sinful ways. Daniel begged him to give his heart to God, but he would not.

So at the end of twelve months he was walking in the palace, and as he saw the beautiful hanging gardens and all the riches of his kingdom, he said it had all been gained because he was so great.

But "while the word was still in his mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

The thing happened that same hour, and in this state he remained until "his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." The meaning of this must be that Nebuchadnezzar went insane and imagined himself to be some wild animal eating grass. However it was, it was a dreadful punishment.

At the end of seven years his reason returned, and the first thing he did was to praise and honor God. And his kingdom was given back to him, with even greater riches.

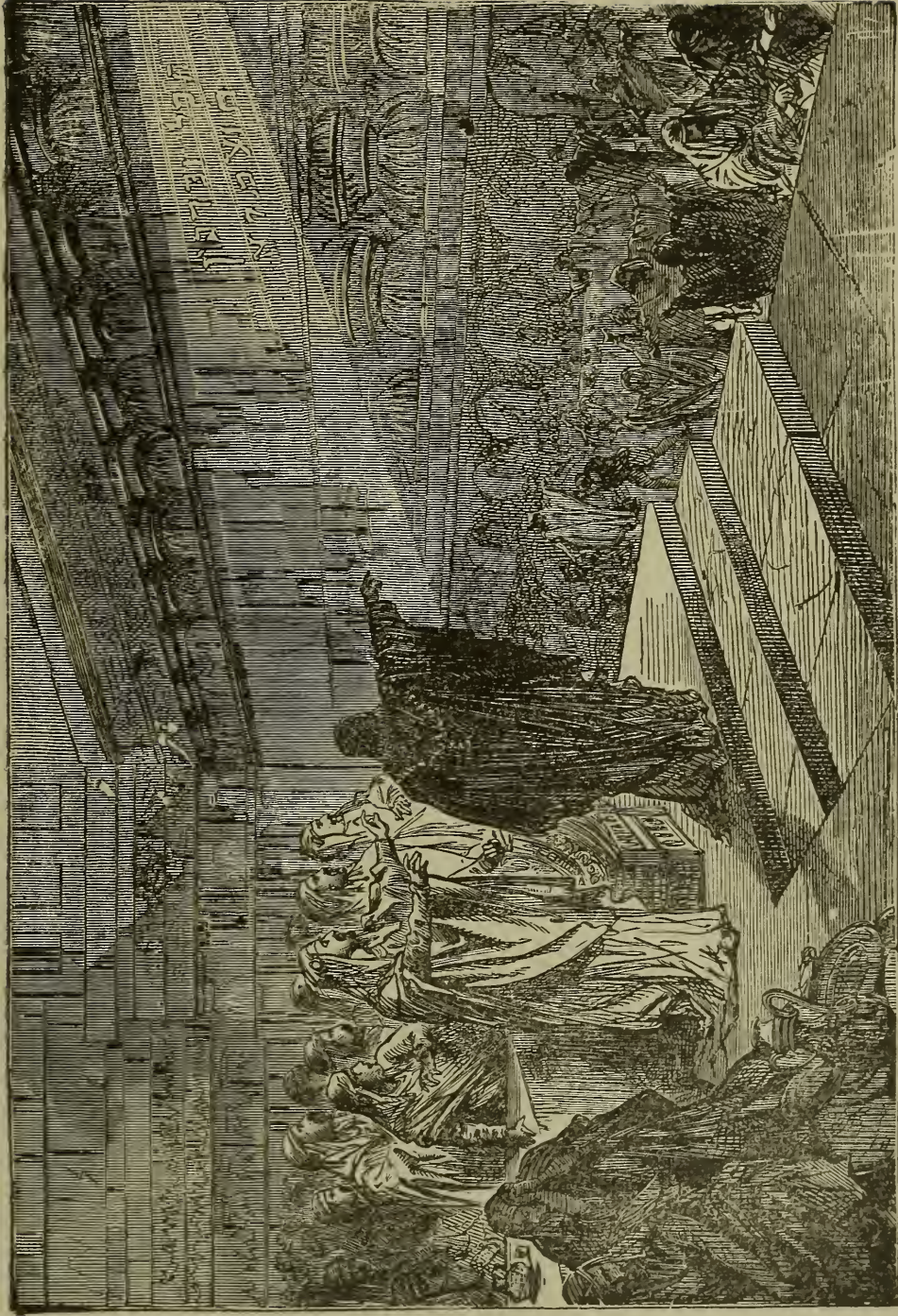
Thus the great, proud king was humbled; and God will humble all who are proud in heart. God deserves all the praise for what we have and are.

The Strange Writing on the Wall.

AT last Nebuchadnezzar died, and his grandson Belshazzar was king. This new king was quite like his grandfather, for he was proud and worshiped idols.

One day Belshazzar made a great feast and invited all his princes and lords to it. They had wine at the feast; and as Belshazzar drank of it, he remembered the beautiful gold and silver cups that his grandfather had taken away from the temple at Jerusalem and brought to Babylon.

He then commanded that these be brought, that his company and wives (for he had many wives) might drink out of them. The cups were soon brought; and as they drank wine from them, they praised their gods that were made of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.



THE LAND WRITING ON THE WALL.

While they were drinking, the king saw the fingers of a man's hand writing on the wall of the palace. It was near the place where the candlestick stood, so that they could see plainly; but no one could read the writing, or see anything except the fingers of the hand that was doing the writing.

The king did not look merry any longer, but was frightened, and trembled so that his knees knocked against each other.

Belshazzar then called for the wise men and told them to hasten and read the writing for him. He said that whoever would read it should be clothed in a scarlet robe and have a chain of gold about his neck, and he should be the third ruler in the land.

Although the king made such great offers, none of the wise men were able to read the words upon the wall. These are the words that Belshazzar saw: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The king became more and more frightened when he saw that none of the men could read them; for he was afraid they meant that something dreadful was about to happen.

The queen was not present at the feast; but she heard of the strange writing on the wall and also that no one could read it. Then she remembered Daniel, who had interpreted so many things for Nebuchadnezzar, and hastened in to tell the king.

Daniel had grown to be an old man, and since the death of Nebuchadnezzar had almost been forgotten. But as soon as Belshazzar sent for him, he came.

And Daniel said, "Keep thy gifts, O king; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation."

Then Daniel told the king of Nebuchadnezzar's heart being lifted up with pride; of his hardening his heart against God until God took his glory from him; and of his heart being made like the beasts until he knew the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he made whomsoever he would king. "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast set thyself up against the Lord of heaven, and hast even drunk from the cups taken from his house." And Daniel told him that the writing

on the wall meant that his reign as king was at an end. When Daniel had told what the words upon the wall meant, Belshazzar commanded his men to clothe him in red and put a gold chain on his neck, and to make it known that he was to be third in rank from the king.

That same night Belshazzar was slain, and Daniel took his place upon the throne.

Daniel in the Den of Lions.

AFTER Belshazzar's death there was a king named Darius. He was proud like the other kings had been. He was a heathen, too, and worshiped idols; but he liked Daniel. He even made Daniel ruler over the princes and judges in the land, and told them to do as Daniel said.

This made these men hate Daniel, and they tried in every way they could to find out something against him, so that they could tell the king.

But Daniel was a good man in every way, and these wicked men could not get him into disgrace. They never saw Daniel do anything wrong.

At last they thought of a way to get Daniel into trouble without telling lies about him. It would not have hurt their conscience to tell lies; but they feared the king would not believe, and then they might be found out.

Daniel loved God very much and he used to tell him so and thank him for his goodness three times every day. Now these evil men knew this; so they went to the king and asked him to make a law that no one should pray to any god or man, except to the king himself, for a whole month, and that if any person did pray to any one else, he should be cast into the den of lions.

The king, being so proud, was pleased to do this; but he saw his mistake when it was too late. He did not remember that Daniel prayed three times a day, or he would not have made this law; but now it was made and signed, and he could not change it.

Did the thing which the king had done make Daniel afraid to

pray? Ah no! He went as he had always done and prayed three times a day with his window wide open toward Jerusalem.

He could not see Jerusalem; but he knew which way it was from his room, and that God loved the city and used to come down into the temple before it was destroyed. So Daniel liked to look that way when he prayed.

Daniel was not afraid to have the people hear him pray; and so when these evil men came and listened, they heard Daniel praying to God.

The men hurried to tell the king that Daniel had not paid any attention to the law, but prayed three times every day.

When the king heard their words, he was very sorry he had made the law. He even tried all the rest of the day to find some way to deliver him. But when the king saw there was no way to help Daniel, he tried to encourage him.

The lions' den was a deep place underneath the ground. When they put Daniel into this place, the king said, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." Darius must have heard how the three young men were delivered from the fiery furnace. Then a stone was brought and placed at the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his seal.

The king was very unhappy that night. He did not eat, and could not sleep. He was thinking about Daniel, and longing for the morning to come. Then he would go and release him, for he expected to find Daniel alive.

So very early the next morning he arose and hastened to the den. When he came near the place, he cried out in a very sad voice, "O Daniel, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"

What joy must have filled the poor heathen king's heart when he heard Daniel's own voice saying, "O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; because I had done nothing wrong."

How glad the king was then! He commanded the men to take

Daniel up out of the den, and they found that he was not hurt at all, because God had protected him.

The king was very angry with the men who had asked him to put Daniel into the lions' den, and he had them brought before him. Then they and their wives and children were thrown into the den, and the lions broke their bones in pieces before they touched the ground. This was very cruel.

Then King Darius wrote letters and sent them to all the countries, saying that every one in every dominion of his kingdom should fear the God of Daniel; for he was the true God, who could do wonders, and who had saved Daniel from the lions.

Something about Babylon.

BEFORE we go any further, let us have a little talk about the Jews, their captivity, the city of Babylon, to which they were taken captive, and why God permitted the heathen kings to keep them as their slaves.

When God first called Abram, he intended to make his children, who should follow him, a peculiar people; that is, they were to be different from every other nation in the world. God planned that they were to be stewards of the mysteries of God, meaning that he would perform many wonders through them.

You have seen how unfaithful they were to God, and now you see what punishment their unfaithfulness brought upon them. But their unfaithfulness to God did not make his promises of no effect. No, indeed; it was the other way.

The Jews might have worked for God and have been very happy. Though they would not do this, yet God showed his power and might as their leader, but they were unhappy, miserable.

But through all their unfaithfulness God was ever ready to help them when they called upon him. In this way the heathen nations were all made to see that the God of Israel was able to do anything.

And when God showed his power in saving the three young men from the fiery furnace, and Daniel from the lions, it did not make the heathen people praise their gods. Instead of this, the great proud kings sent word to all nations to worship the most high God. So even their captivity brought praise and honor to God, even more than when they were living quietly at home: for then they were worshiping idols so much of the time.

And now a few words about that great city Babylon. It was about fifty-six miles around the city, and the river Euphrates ran through it. All around the city's wall was a deep moat, or a ditch filled with water, outside of which was another very high wall with towers and watchmen upon it. Thus it was almost impossible to get inside the city. These great walls are almost entirely gone now; only a few mounds show where the gates were.

The houses were nearly all made of brick, three and four stories high; and the streets were all straight, the cross streets having beautiful gates of bronze at the river.

One bridge is said to have been about three thousand feet long and thirty feet wide, all built of stone. This bridge connected two palaces on opposite sides of the river.

There were three very high walls around the royal palace on the eastern side. The second and middle walls were made of colored brick, with pictures of hunting scenes upon them. And there was a tunnel under the river, through which they could pass from one palace to the other.

Within this city and these palaces was everything any person could desire to make him happy. All this was what Nebuchadnezzar saw, as he stood in his palace. But he said that all this wealth had been gained by his greatness. That was why God punished him and took his reason away, that he might know it was only through God he could do anything.

The prophet Jeremiah said Babylon would be destroyed, and it was so. The night of Belshazzar's feast the course of the river was changed, and the Medes and Persians took Babylon.

God's people were in captivity about seventy years, as had been prophesied. At the end of this time there was a good king in Persia, known as Cyrus.

God put it into the heart of this king to let the Jews return to their own land and rebuild the city of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed.



BUILDING OF THE NEW TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.

For Daniel had had some wonderful dreams and visions, revealing to him that God's time was near at hand for his temple to be rebuilt; and that some day not very far off God was going to send his own dear Son to be king over the Jews. They would not have God as their king, but perhaps they would accept his Son.

Cyrus was very kind to the Jews. He gave them not only the

privilege of returning to their native land, but also the things they would need to build themselves new homes. And he was so interested in the rebuilding of the temple that he supplied the means to build it as nearly like the first had been as possible.

The people went to work with a will and were very happy. Of course, there was much to discourage them, and it was many years before the temple was finished. They did not forget to keep the feast of the passover.

Some of the Jews did not return. They chose to stay where they were in bondage rather than go back to their own land and be free; but, of course, they knew there would be many hardships to meet, and they were not brave enough to meet them.

Queen Vashti Refuses to Obey the King.

PERHAPS you have forgotten that the kingdom of Israel was divided into two parts, but I hope not. The part that was still called Israel, you remember, was taken captive a long time before the Jews were taken.

After the Jews returned to Jerusalem, some of the people in that country wanted to help them rebuild the city; but the Jews said, "No." This made the people angry, and they became very bitter enemies of the Jews. Many years afterward, these people were known as the Samaritans.

All the Jews, you will remember, did not go back when their brethren did. They made their homes in Persia and other countries.

King Cyrus died and Darius was king in his stead; then there was a king named Ahasuerus on the throne.

After Ahasuerus had been king about three years, he made a great feast and invited all that were in the court of his palace, both great and small. They drank much wine at this feast from golden cups.

Now, the queen's name was Vashti. She was a very beautiful

woman. At the same time the king's feast was going on Vashti made a feast for the women.

On the seventh day of this feast King Ahasuerus sent for the queen to come in before the men and to throw back her veil, that they might all see how fair she was. This Vashti refused to do, for she did not feel that it would be modest to do such a thing.

The king was very angry because the queen refused to obey him, and he said to his wise men, "What shall we do unto the Queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king?"

And the wise men said, "Vashti hath done wrong to the king and to all the lords of the land; for when this is told and our wives hear what the queen hath done, they will not obey us. They will say, The king sent word for Vashti to be brought to him, and she came not. Let the king make a law and put Vashti away and choose a new queen, that all wives everywhere, may know that they must do as they are told."

The king and all the lords thought these were wise words, and the king made it a law that a man should rule in his own house. And letters to this effect were sent to every part of his kingdom.

Then some of the men came and said it would be a good plan to bring a number of fair maidens before the king, that he might choose one of them to be queen instead of Vashti. The king was pleased with this plan, and Vashti was not queen after that.

Esther Becomes Queen.

NOW in the palace there was a Jew, whose name was Mordecai. He was a poor man and was there to wait upon the king. This man had taken his uncle's daughter, who was an orphan, to raise as his own. Her name was Esther, and she was very beautiful.

Esther soon became the favorite of all, and was given the best room in the house of the women. Seven maids were given Esther, and

she had everything she desired. But no one knew she was a Jew, for Mordecai had told her it would be best not to tell who were her people.

Every day Mordecai came to see how Esther was and what would become of her. But it took a whole year before they could know who would be chosen queen instead of Vashti.



ESTHER, THE BEAUTIFUL QUEEN.

At last the time came. When the king saw Esther, he loved her and set the crown upon her head and made her queen.

Then the king made a great feast, and gave gifts unto the people of his provinces.

One day two men were angry with the king; and these men

planned to kill him. Mordecai heard their plan and told Esther to tell the king, which she did. Both of the wicked men were hanged, and it was written in a big book that Mordecai had saved the king's life.

In the same book were written all the things that happened in the king's realm.

There was a man in the king's palace whose name was Haman. He was a wicked man, but he held a high office in the king's house. And he made every one who was of low rank bow down to him. But there was one man who would not bow down. It was Mordecai the Jew.

Now the people knew Mordecai was a Jew, though they did not know about Esther. So when men came to Haman and told him that Mordecai would not bow down to him, he was angry and tried to find some way to kill him. He scorned the thought of taking the life of Mordecai only, for he was informed that Mordecai was a Jew, and he sought to destroy all the Jews who had remained in the land.

“And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

“If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed; and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.”
Esther 3: 8, 9.

The king said to Haman, “Do to them as it seemeth good to thee.”

Then the king had it written in the great book, that every one should destroy, kill, and cause to perish all the Jews found in the land, and to take all that belonged to the Jews as their own property. And the king sent out letters for all to be ready at a certain time to destroy the Jews.

Wicked Haman.

WHEN Mordecai knew of the plot which had been laid to kill the Jews, he was very sorry. He would eat no food, and "he put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry." All the Jews were in great distress over the matter.

At last Mordecai came near the king's gate. Then Esther heard, through her maids and servants, that Mordecai was in great trouble. She sent clothing for Mordecai to wear instead of the sackcloth he was wearing on account of his sorrow, but he refused to receive the clothing. Then Esther sent Hatach, a servant, to ask Mordecai why he was so sad. He told Hatach to tell her what was going to happen to the Jews. And Mordecai said that Esther must go to the king and urge him to be favorable to the Jews.

At first Esther did not want to do this; for she knew there was a law that if any came into the king's presence without having been sent for, they were in danger of being killed. But Mordecai told her that it would soon be found out that she was a Jew, and then she would be killed anyway; and said that perhaps it was for the purpose of delivering her people that God had let her become queen.

Esther did not wait any longer then. She sent word back that all the Jews in that place must fast and pray for her three days and three nights; that she and her maids would also fast; and that then she would go to the king and see if he would spare their lives.

On the third day Queen Esther put on her royal apparel and went to see the king. She must have been a brave and good woman to do this.

When the king saw Esther he held out the golden scepter, that was in his hand. Esther knew by this that the king would not let her be killed. She then heard the king say, "What can I do for you, Queen Esther? You shall have whatever you desire, even to the half of my kingdom."

Esther answered that she would like to have Haman and the king

come to a feast she had prepared for them. This pleased the king, and he told Haman to make haste; and they both went to the feast.

While they were feasting, the king told Esther to make known her request, but she told him to wait until the next day, and then she would prepare another feast, and if the king and Haman would come, she would tell all that was in her heart.

Haman was filled with pride to think that he alone was bidden to eat with the king and queen. When he went away from there, he expected every one to bow to him, but Mordecai did not.

Haman Is Found Out.

HAMAN had much to tell his friends about the kindness of the king and queen, and what a great man he was getting to be.

He told also of the disrespect shown him by Mordecai the Jew, and said that it made him very unhappy to see him sitting at the king's gate.

Haman's wife said it would be a good plan to prepare a gallows in the yard and the next morning to speak to the king and have Mordecai the Jew hanged upon it.

But on the same night that Haman was preparing to hang Mordecai the king was so troubled that he could not sleep. And he sent for the large book in which was written all that happened in the realm, and had it read to him.

When he who read came to the part which told what Mordecai had done to save the king's life, the king said, "What honor has been done to reward Mordecai for this?" And the man said, "Nothing has been done."

Just then a step was heard near the door, and the king sent to know who it was. Now, it was Haman coming to ask that he might hang Mordecai on the gallows which he had made. As soon as the king knew who it was, he said, "Let him come in."

"So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be

done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself?

“And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king’s most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

“Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king’s gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

“Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

“And Mordecai came again to the king’s gate. But Haman hastened to his house mourning, and having his head covered.” Esther 6:6-12.

When Haman told his wife and friends what had taken place, they said, “If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.” And they were still speaking about the matter when the men came to say that Esther’s feast was ready.

Haman surely did not feel as happy as he had felt the day before when he came to Esther’s feast.

While they were eating, the king asked Esther to tell him what she wished to have him do for her. Then the queen said: “If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.”

The king asked who had dared to do this thing, and Esther told



him it was Haman. Then Haman was afraid and began to understand why he had been asked to the feast.

The king then in anger arose and went outside. There he saw the gallows which Haman had prepared to hang Mordecai upon, and he said to hang Haman instead. This was done, and the king gave all that belonged to Haman into Queen Esther's hands.

Mordecai was given Haman's place in the palace, for Esther had told what he was to her.

The king said he could not change the law that had been made to kill the Jews, but if Esther and Mordecai could think of any way to save them, they might have the power to do so.

So Mordecai sent word to all the Jews that the king had given them the right to fight for their lives. Quite a number were killed on both sides, but the Lord helped the Jews.

Mordecai became such a great man that the captains and lieutenants, were afraid to displease him, and so the Jews continued to defeat their enemies, and after a while they ceased fighting.

The Jews were so happy and their hearts so full of joy and gladness that they made a great feast. Mordecai called this feast Purim, and said they must have a feast every year on that day. And this feast was kept year after year in remembrance of their fasting and crying.

King Jesus.

YOU will be glad to hear that the Jews determined to worship idols no more. But although they did not worship idols, they did not love God with all their hearts; so they did a great many other wicked things.

Among those who returned to Jerusalem, and also among those who remained in Persia were a few who really loved God.

God sent them prophets sometimes to teach them and put them in mind of a promise that he had made years before to Abraham. The

promise was that some day a Savior should be born, who should be their king forever. God had made the same promise to David, and had said that this Savior should be one of David's descendants.

Some of the Jews thought very often of this promise and longed for the Savior to be born into the world. They knew that he would be born in Bethlehem, where David was born, because the prophets had said that he should be born there; and they knew that he would come from the family of David, for the prophets had said so; and they knew that he would be King of the Jews and of all people, for this the prophets had also said.

And now I will close these stories with the wonderful story of Jesus. Jesus was the Savior that the prophets had said was to come.

The Jews were looking for him, it is true; but some of them were proud, and were looking for a Messiah, or a great king, to come down to them out of the clouds, or after some such manner. But God had never said the Savior would come in this way.

Now, there was a young woman whose name was Mary. She lived in the town of Nazareth, a city about sixty miles from Jerusalem. She had promised to marry a very good man named Joseph.

One day an angel came to her and said, "Hail, thou art highly favored; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Mary was afraid and did not understand what the angel meant; so he told her again.

This angel's name was Gabriel. He told Mary that a son should be born to her, and that she should call his name Jesus, and that Jesus should be called the Son of God, and should be the King the Jews were looking for to sit upon the throne of David.

Mary believed all the angel said; and when he departed, she went away to visit her cousin Elizabeth. It was a long journey; but God cared for Mary, and she arrived at her cousin's safely.

As soon as Elizabeth saw Mary, she said, "Blessed art thou among women. How is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

Then Mary saw that Elizabeth knew about the babe that was

promised to her. And Mary said such beautiful words. She said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord; for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden."

How humble Mary was! She spoke of herself as being low. She did not think herself great or good, even though she was to be the mother of the Son of God.

Mary made a long visit with her cousin Elizabeth, and then returned to her old home in Nazareth. Soon she made another long journey, this time with Joseph, her husband.

Every one in those days had to be taxed; that is, they had to pay money to the king and have their names written down. And because Mary and Joseph were descended from David they went to Bethlehem, the city of David's birth, to be taxed.

When they arrived at Bethlehem, they went to the inn, or hotel; but there was no room for them. Then they went into the stable among the oxen. And it was in this humble place that the babe was born.

Mary had clothes ready for it, such as they used in those days, but she had no cradle. So she laid him in the manger.

No one knew what a glorious babe was born. There were some shepherds watching their sheep in a field. While these men were caring for their sheep, a great light suddenly shone around them. They were very much afraid, but an angel said to them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And the angel said they would find the babe lying in a manger in the town of Bethlehem.

And suddenly they heard a multitude of angels singing and praising God. The angels said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

As soon as the singing was ended and the angels gone, the shepherds said, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see the babe." God directed them so that they soon found Mary and Joseph and the manger where Jesus was.



JESUS IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM.

Oh, how lovingly these men looked down at the tiny child! for they realized he was God's Son, the King of the Jews. They told Mary that angels had told them where to find the child, and they told many others, who at the time wondered at these things. Mary thought of these things many times, and could see God's hand in many ways.

Do you think the Jews accepted Jesus for their king? Some of them did, but most of the Jews were too proud. Although some of the Jews did not like Jesus, or want him to be their King, yet he was their King just the same.

It was through their treating Jesus as they did that God made it possible for the lost tribes of Israel and every other nation in the world to own his dear Son as their Savior and King. This was the way he came to be our Savior.

You remember it was Adam's sin in the garden of Eden that brought the curse of sin upon the whole world.

God was very good to the people, and sent his dear Son Jesus down here to give his life (for the Jews who refused to take Jesus as their King, hated him, and put him to death).

But it was God's plan that Jesus should die, so that all who would might be saved from their sins through his blood. He died for all who would accept him.

Jesus always loved little children, and they can receive his salvation the same as older persons.

When children have been doing things that they know to be wrong, such as telling lies, or taking things that do not belong to them, and doing other things that the Word of God says not to do, a sad feeling comes over them. These bad things are sins, and sin displeases the Lord. Whenever the children are sorry and ask God in Jesus' name to forgive them, he will, and he will take away all the sin out of their hearts and give them real peace and joy instead.

Children can be happy little Christians, and when they die go to heaven, where they will see Jesus their king, and live with the holy angels forever.

Little children, you have heard
Out of God's dear, precious Word
 Stories true,
 Telling you
How things years ago occurred.

And you've oft heard of the land
Where God sent his chosen band
 To employ
 And enjoy
Ev'rything as he had planned.

And you've heard, my children dear,
Stories sad, and stories queer,
 How God's care
 Of them there
Filled the hearts of foes with fear.

Now this same God cares for you,
Notes each act, and saying, too,
 When at play,
 All the day,
Watches ev'rything you do.

In a book both large and great
God has written children's fate;
 And he'll read
 Ev'ry deed
When they meet at heaven's gate.

Little children, then beware
That no action when placed there
 Bar you out
 When about
Heaven's land to claim a share.

THE END.



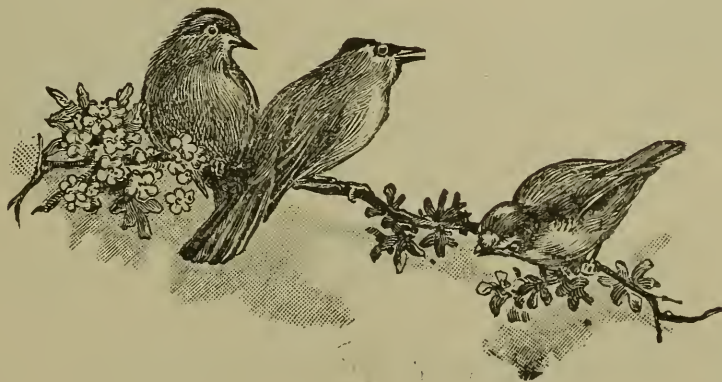
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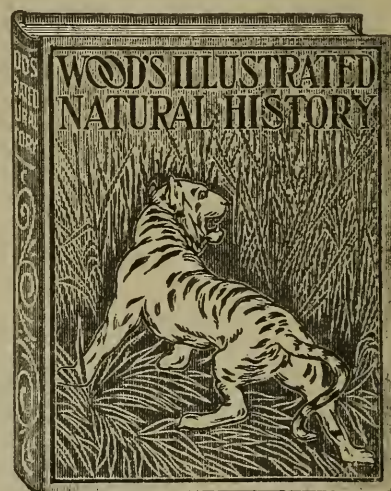
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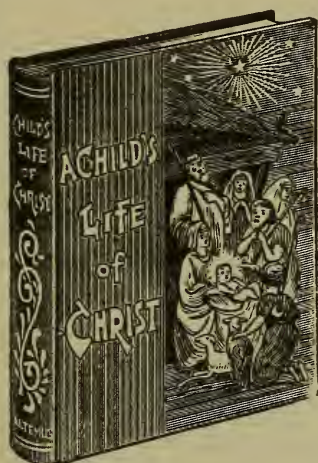
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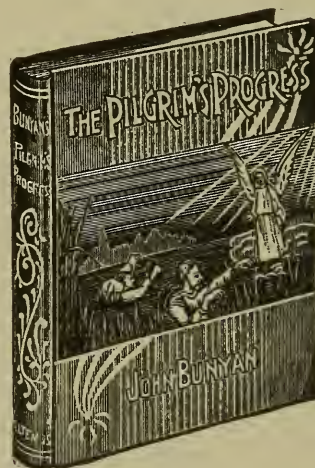
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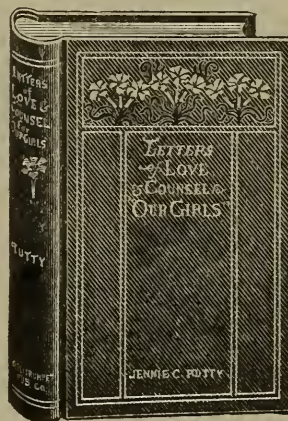
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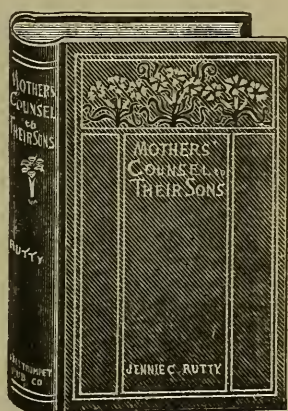
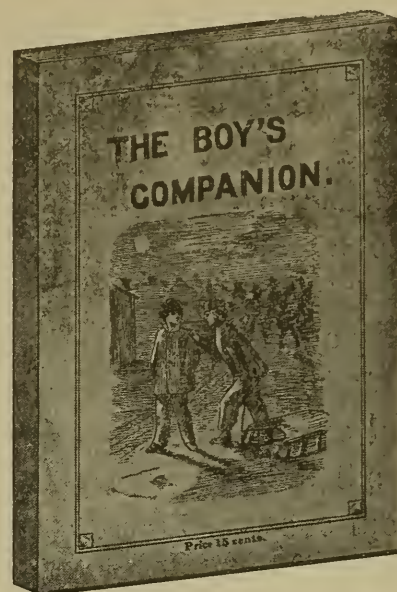
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